Backpack a Dizzying Descent to the Colorado River

arizonahighways.com SEPTEMBER 2004

Arizona Highways

Visit Cochise Country

Where Even JOHNNY REB Got a Taste of Apache Vengeance

DROP IN ON KINGMAN

A Family Place

VIEW THE LITTLE COLORADO RIVER

Primeval Splendor

BOY-ARTIST PHENOM

of the Navajos

ARIZONA HIGHWAYS
SEPTEMBER 2004

[THIS PAGE] The West Fork of the Little Colorado River meanders past the fallen skeletons of streamside pine trees in this view near the headwaters on the flanks of 11,403-foot Baldy Peak in the Mount Baldy Wilderness. For more photos of this high mountain waterway, see the portfolio on page 20. BRUCE GRIFFIN
[FRONT COVER] In a scene virtually unchanged since Cochise and his Chiricahua Apache band roamed the area, sunset lights a soaptree yucca and the grasslands at the foot of the western Dragoon Mountains. DAVID MUENCH
[BACK COVER] Sycamore, velvet ash and cottonwood trees line rocky Cochise Stronghold Canyon East in the Dragoon Mountains. JACK DYKINGA

{also inside}

POINTS OF INTEREST FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

{more stories online}
at arizonahighways.com

GENE PERRET'S WIT STOP
Our writer casts himself as the cowboy hero in his first Western novel, but his wife-editor is skeptical.

ONLINE EXTRA
Guru of Canyon Tourism
John Hance was practically the father of Grand Canyon visitation, and many famous sites bear his name today.

WEEKEND GETAWAY
Grand Canyon
Most visitors see the Grand Canyon from the South and North rims. The Hualapai Indian land offers another point of view — from the less-traveled west side.

EXPERIENCE ARIZONA
A listing of major events in the state is available online.

{arizona highways on television}

Watch for this independently produced television show inspired by *Arizona Highways* magazine. The weekly half-hour show airs in Phoenix, Tucson and Flagstaff in both English and Spanish.

Robin Sewell, a veteran television news anchor and reporter, hosts the show.

English show times: 6:30 P.M. Saturdays on Channel 12 in Phoenix and on Channel 2 in Flagstaff, and at 4:30 P.M. Sundays on Channel 9 in Tucson.

The show airs in Spanish on Channel 33 in Phoenix, Channel 52 in Tucson and Channel 13 in Flagstaff. Check the stations' listings for times.

Back Road Across Arizona

Your article, "Crossing Arizona on Back Roads," (April '04) by Charles Bowden and Jack Dykinga is one of the best. We all know that Dykinga takes beautiful pictures, and he certainly did not let us down in this issue.

But my reason for writing is to compliment Bowden for a fabulous article. I read the whole article with interest, but when I got to the last three paragraphs, for some reason I had tears in my eyes. I think it was because of the poetry with which this man writes. No one can describe a place or a situation any better.

Judith Schooler, Tucson

Put a poet and an artist together on the back roads of Arizona, and the result is the beautiful language and stunning photography of Charles Bowden and Jack Dykinga. Having been on some Arizona back roads with my sons and grandsons, my memories and emotions were stirred and expressed so wonderfully.

Jane Sylvester, Whidbey Island, WA

Charles Bowden's "Crossing Arizona on Back Roads" left me breathless. His vivid descriptions of the intricate beauty of each detail of his journey were so clear that one could almost smell and taste the flavor of what he experienced. Bowden's ability to paint a living picture for the reader just filled my soul with delight.

Doris Green, Prescott

Charles Bowden's poetic words moved me to joy-filled tears and reminded me of the blessed beauty of silence in the Sonoran Desert. People suffering from heart disease, those suffering from panic attacks or facing financial disaster need to read his words: "Nothing that matters moves faster than a heartbeat and that at this very instant all the hearts beat as one." Listening to nature is the best free medicine that exists.

Judy Lyn Sweetland, Seattle, WA

Thanks to all those who overwhelmed us with compliments about the Bowden-Dykinga back road journey.

Rustlers Tracked and Caught

"Crossing Arizona on Back Roads" brought back fond memories about the Planet Ranch and the Bill Williams River. In 1972, as a prosecutor in the Yuma County Attorney's office, I was involved in what had to be one of the most interesting cattle rustling capers in many years.

The "posse" consisting of sheriff's deputies, including Ralph E. Ogden, the current sheriff of Yuma County; Don Moon, Arizona Game and Fish; and Jack Harold, state brand inspector, "tracked" the rustlers' vehicle over many miles of dirt roads (unique tires, not much traffic) and found the remains of the rustled steer in the bottom of an abandoned mine shaft several miles from the Planet Ranch.

They then followed the "trail" to a small ranch house of two brothers, employees at the Planet Ranch. They checked the flatbed truck parked near the house and found the unique tire tread, plus bovine hair that ultimately matched that of the stolen steer.

As they approached the house, they noticed the dogs that were normally running free outside were locked inside the house behind a screen door and were scratching frantically to get out. A deputy approached the house and, during a conversation with one of the occupants, managed to let the dogs slip out. The dogs immediately raced to the dry riverbed nearby where they began digging in the sand and soon uncovered several quarters of beef that had been buried there in the cool, damp sand to keep from spoiling. A rifle was found under the front porch of the house, which was the source of the bullet that killed the steer.

The two brothers were prosecuted for cattle rustling (grand theft). The exhibits were fascinating, including one of the beef quarters (refrigerated) and the hide that matched up. The jury found the brothers guilty, but the conviction of one of the brothers was overturned by the judge for lack of evidence.

Wayne C. Benesch, Yuma

Wild Hog Problem Solved

In regard to "Unwanted and Unloved," ("Taking the Off-ramp," April '04) about feral hogs in the Havasu National Wildlife Refuge, [I recommend they] buy Louisiana Catahoula "hog dogs." The Catahoula leopard dog is the Louisiana state dog. According to legend, they have been hunting hogs since DeSoto left some Spanish "war dogs" and hogs behind in the 1500s, and the Catahoula Indians adopted them.

When the Kentuckians passed through on their way to Texas, they introduced their hunting dogs into the breed. The Anglo settlers used these dogs to bring in livestock out of the swamps.

A team of three Catahoulas can round up a feral hog in good time. I raised these amazing dogs when we lived in Louisiana. They are, in my opinion, the best all-around utility dog.

Oh, lest I forget, Catahoulas have been known to read human minds. I know this for a fact as I had a stud that could read my mind. This is true and spooky.

Roberta Waldrop, Boerne, TX

Unfortunately, the managers at the wildlife refuge, who know of the Catahoulas, say the refuge's terrain makes use of the dogs impractical.

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E-MAIL "LETTERS TO THE EDITOR":
editor@arizonahighways.com
Regular Mail:
Editor
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PRODUCED IN THE USA

Arizona's Heritage in Architecture

When Isabella Selmes Greenway, Arizona's first U.S. congresswoman (1933-36), started a furniture factory for disabled World War I veterans, she suddenly owned more tables and chairs than she knew what to do with.

"Someone told my grandmother she had enough furniture to build a hotel," says Greenway's granddaughter, Patty Doar. "So she did."

Standing at 2200 E. Elm St., 3 miles from downtown Tucson, the 86-room Arizona Inn opened in 1931 and has remained largely unchanged since. Constructed of fired clay brick, covered with stucco and painted rosy pink with cobalt blue accents, the buildings of the hotel reflect the Spanish Colonial Revival style popular in the Southwest.

Greenway wanted to build a hotel where her guests, including the likes of Clark Gable, Eleanor Roosevelt, John D. Rockefeller and the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, could enjoy "privacy, quiet and sunshine" — three things the luxurious Arizona Inn offers in abundance.

To read more about the inn and other buildings that enliven Arizona's urban and rural landscape, pick up a new travel guide by Ann Patterson and Mark Vinson, *Landmark Buildings: Arizona's Architectural Heritage*, published by Arizona Highways Books. The volume highlights 45 of the state's most arresting edifices. To order, call toll-free (800) 543-5432 or visit arizonahighways.com.

Forgotten Land

The Devil was given
permission one day
To select him a land for his own
special way;
So he hunted around for a
month or more
And fussed and fumed and
terribly swore,
But at last was delighted a
country to view
Where the
prickly pear and
the mesquite
grew
And now, no doubt, in some
corner of hell
He gloats over the work he has
done so well,
And vows that
Arizona
cannot be beat
For scorpions,
tarantulas, snakes
and heat . . .

Charles O. Brown, "Arizona: The Land That God Forgot," 1879

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: PHOTO, EDWARD McCAIN; PHOTO, GEORGE ANDREJKO. ILLUSTRATIONS, LINDA LONGMIRE

Native Apache Trout Swims Again

Arizona's Apache trout — the first native fish to be placed on the federal endangered species list — may become the first removed from that list within a few years as a result of a 30-year recovery effort.

More than half the state's 36 native fishes are included in the federal listing, but the Apache trout is deemed a special entry, as much a part of Arizona's heritage as the Grand Canyon and the Sonoran Desert. The colorful yellow-gold fish spotted with black can weigh up to 6 pounds and lives only in the streams and lakes of eastern Arizona's high country, primarily in waters on the White Mountain Apache Reservation.

A hundred years ago, Apache trout swam in 600 miles of cool streams, but in 1955 all those streams were closed to fishing following recognition of the trout's endangered survival. Now, through hatchery propagation of genetically pure strains and restoration of streams to keep away competing species, fishable populations are returning to a variety of locations.

THIS MONTH IN

1872
A Prescott newspaper urges an end to an exodus of **Arizonans fleeing** the Territory **for riches in** the silver mines of **Sonora, Mexico**.

1879
The *Los Angeles Express* newspaper says about **Tucson's festival**: "Here nightly are gathered together one to two thousand people of all classes, nations and colors who walk, gamble, drink, dance and **howl like a pack of coyotes**."

1898
An elderly Nogales **woman drowns in her own bed** after storm waters flood local houses.

Bisbee's public **school** begins its fall term with **306 pupils**.

Fire destroys Jerome, a booming mining camp. Searchers recover **12 bodies**.

1911
The Territorial **inspector of weights and measures** determines that **30 out of 33 scales** in Tucson give **short weight**.

The Republican **campaign headquarters** on Tucson's Meyer Street passes out **free liquor** to citizens, resulting in **two shootings**.

Granite Creek Mural in Prescott Ties Past to Present

Eager to unite the past with the present, Prescott artist Elizabeth Newman pioneered a mural project along Granite Creek, which wends through the town that grew up along its banks.

Seventh-graders from Mile High Middle School, armed with interest and community pride, scoured the archives at the Sharlot Hall Museum to create a historical profile of the creek and the communities it has served over the centuries.

This 12-week project of the Arizona Folklore Society was unveiled in 2001 and portrays the Yavapai creation story as the central theme with pictorial storylines of Spanish explorers, early pioneers and modern-day Prescott. Stretching 75 feet long and reaching 11 feet high, the colorful mural depicts everything from traditional Yavapai basketry to an RV caught in a flash flood 40 years ago.

"I started the project in hopes that someday the whole creek will be lined with murals," said Newman. "It is here to inspire people to remember their stories."

The Beauty of It All

"Arizona. Mellow, golden, sustaining, beautiful, clean with desert wind. . . . I tell you . . . this . . . is a wonderful country."

— Zane Grey, *Lost Pueblo*, 1927

LIFE IN ARIZONA 1920s

Sharlot Hall's Copper Dress

Sharlot Hall — pioneer, poet and historian — chronicled Arizona Territory and opened a museum to preserve the past on the old capitol grounds in Prescott.

While working on her first book of poetry, Hall was asked to represent the Republicans in the Electoral College. To long-time friend Alice Hewins she wrote: ". . . if the Party does win and I go, it is probable that I will be presented with a gown of Arizona copper cloth to wear while officiating — no small ad for Arizona copper and also solving the dress problem for me in a unique way."

Indeed, Calvin Coolidge won the presidential election a short time later. Hall traveled to Washington to cast Arizona's electoral votes. On February 24, 1925, the blue silk dress and its copper mesh overdress arrived just in time for a luncheon held by the Senate wives honoring Mrs. Coolidge.

Sharlot Hall models the 7-pound Arizona copper dress.

The copper dress, its matching copper mesh handbag and hat ornamented with cacti were a hit, and Hall reported to Hewins with relief that the unusual ensemble ". . . is really very pretty and not a bit freaky." Hall wore the copper creation again at the inaugural ceremonies on March 4 and noted with pleasure that Mrs. Coolidge also honored Arizona by wearing a silver-and-turquoise necklace sent by the Smoki People, an organization dedicated to preserving Indian ceremonies and dances.

The full-length copper overdress weighs 7 pounds and can be in seen in its fully restored glory at the Sharlot Hall Museum in Prescott.

Information: (928) 445-3122, www.sharlot.org.

CONTRIBUTORS
NOAH ALESHIRE
LEE ALLEN
LEO W. BANKS
RON BUTLER
CARRIE M. MINER
TANYA PAYNE
CHERYL A. SWEET
JOHN J.J. WARD

Get a Haircut and a Fishing Report at Henry's Barbershop

For two-thirds of a century, Henry's Barbershop, on Springerville's Main Street (U.S. Route 60), has kept men's hair looking sharp and served as a local social venue. It opened in 1940 as Franklin's Barber Shop, named for the founder who always kept a bottle of redeye whiskey under his chair to share with clients.

Henry Reyes, who began working for the founder 35 years ago, bought the shop after Franklin retired and continues to cut hair the old-fashioned way, every Tuesday through Saturday.

Both Henry and sidekick Clement "Clem" Garcia are on top of the latest news, sporting events, the best fishing spots and where the deer and antelope play and the elk roam.

Long a male bastion, the shop now has some female clients seeking a quick trim. Others come with their partners to join in continuing general conversations.

"See you next year," said a summer visitor, pausing at the door, after getting her Betty Page-like bangs trimmed.

Information: (928) 333-2511.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: PHOTO, DALE SCHICKETANZ; PHOTO-ILLUSTRATION, LINDA LONGMIRE; PHOTO, JOSEPHINE'S RESTAURANT; ILLUSTRATION, LINDA LONGMIRE

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ILLUSTRATION, LINDA LONGMIRE; PHOTO, STUDENTS OF MILE HIGH MIDDLE SCHOOL; PHOTO, SHARLOT HALL MUSEUM, PRESCOTT

A Rare Find for Book-lovers

With numerous large bookstores covering the urban landscape, The Antiquarian Shop, 40 years at the same Scottsdale location, offers a unique selection of "rare, unusual and worthwhile books." Two other sellers of out-of-print and limited editions, Acluin Books and Charles Parkhurst Rare Books, have joined the Antiquarian, creating three unusual shops at one location.

Serious collectors can pick up rarities such as a signed, first edition of John Steinbeck's *In Dubious Battle* for $8,000, or a first edition of Frank L. Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* for $12,000. Collectors with a smaller budget might be intrigued with finds like *Extracts from Adam's Diary* by Mark Twain, for $350, bound in its original red cloth cover, or a 1954 numbered edition of John Milton's *The Masque of Comus* for $150. There are treasures galore and, would you believe, no cappuccino machine?

Information: (480) 947-0535, theantiquarianshop.com.

Fine Flagstaff Food in History's Shadow

Once occupied by the Babbitt family (of later Arizona politics fame), Josephine's Restaurant brings a touch of sophistication to Flagstaff. The residence was completed in 1911 and was the home of John Milton Clark, a prominent Flagstaff businessman involved in local politics.

The architecture reflects the utilitarian Craftsman Bungalow movement popular near the turn of the last century. The house was the first in Flagstaff constructed in native malpais rock, which is still used in modern architecture around northern Arizona.

Today's visitors at the house, now a chef-owned eclectic eatery, start their meals with champagne vinaigrette salads with grapefruit and candied pecans. They move on to ancho-marinated steak with cheddar polenta, tortilla-crusted halibut with cilantro rice, cedar pink salmon or lemon-tarragon roasted chicken, accompanied by a choice from the wine list.

Find Josephine's in the historic district at 403 N. Humphreys St.

Information: (928) 779-3400.

Question of the Month

Q What is a **dust devil** and how does it differ from a **tornado**?

A A **dust devil forms from hot surface air trapped on the ground** beneath the cooler air above, while a **tornado evolves from hot air in the atmosphere** trapped beneath cooler thunderstorm clouds.

Dust devils can take off a few shingles from a roof or rearrange the desert a little. In September 2000, a dust devil hit the Coconino County Fairgrounds and scattered debris up to 300 feet.

OVER THE ROCKS

RIDER CANYON poses a challenge
in reaching the Colorado's
HOUSE ROCK RAPIDS

Text by KATHLEEN BRYANT
Photographs by LARRY LINDAHL

DOWN TO THE RIVER

We park our four-wheel drive on a knoll that sweeps down to the edge of Rider Canyon in far northern Arizona, its depths shadowy in the late-afternoon light. We hope to set up camp here and hike into the canyon in the morning.

A narrow break in the Kaibab limestone is the only hint at the route. Massive boulders lie in a jumble down a dizzying descent; then the trail disappears below a gargantuan chockstone. The thought of wriggling underneath tons of rock makes my stomach clench.

This treacherous passage of tumbled stone marks just the beginning of nearly 3 miles of steep talus slope, cliffs, pourovers and pools leading down to the Colorado River.

Even with climbing rope for lowering our packs down cliffs and an air mattress for crossing deep pools, any single obstacle might bar us from our goal, the beach at House Rock Rapids along the Colorado River, 17 miles below Lee's Ferry. If we make it, our reward will be our own private beach in a remote stretch of canyon, not far from the place where members of a late 19th-century river expedition perished.

"We can't get past that chockstone wearing our packs," I say unnecessarily.

"We'll use the rope to lower them from above," Larry Lindahl, my hiking companion, responds, making it sound easy, although I have my doubts.

A thundercloud, foreboding as the prospect of tomorrow's descent, hangs above as we head back to our truck. A loud buzzing interrupts my thoughts.

"I hope that's not a tire," I fret. We've driven a 12-mile maze of ranch tracks and Bureau of Land Management roads scattered with nasty sharp chunks of limestone that reached for tires like toothy

[PRECEDING PANEL, PAGES 6 AND 7] The great sandstone walls of Rider Canyon dwarf author Kathleen Bryant as she makes her way through the jumbled boulders near the rift's confluence with the Colorado River.
[LEFT] Rider Canyon meets the Colorado River at river Mile 17 measured from Lee's Ferry, as all Grand Canyon river distances are calculated. There, a tumbling, churning maelstrom of rock and water known as House Rock Rapids provides a powerful display of the river's force and an intimidating obstacle to boaters challenging the river.
[ABOVE] Author Bryant negotiates a talus slope as she begins her descent to the Colorado River through Rider Canyon.

jaws. We circle the truck, looking for the leak, then realize the sound is coming from the vibrating radio antenna.

"Weird," says Larry.

"Hmm . . ." I look up. The late-September weather seems suspiciously monsoonlike. Clouds dance over the Kaibab Plateau all afternoon, bellies flashing, unfurling sheets of rain along the edge of House Rock Valley.

We decide to backtrack to lower ground, then watch, amazed, as a blazing white bolt strikes our would-be campsite. The highest point along the rim, the knoll becomes the epicenter of a fierce squall. Twenty minutes later, the storm moves east toward Echo Cliffs, glowing in a swath of sunlight. A double rainbow briefly glimmers against magenta clouds.

"Maybe it's an omen," I say.

"The storm or the rainbow?"

I shake my head, unsure. We return to the knoll, but decide to sleep in the back of the truck rather than risk weathering another storm with our small tent.

I awake to blue skies as Larry returns from photographing the Vermilion Cliffs to the north. Looking west, we can see the high plateau of Grand Canyon's North Rim. A web of hidden canyons, dark cracks in the valley floor, leads to the Colorado River.

This upper section of the Colorado's run through Grand Canyon is known as Marble Canyon. Explorer John Wesley Powell's 1869 account expressed awe: "The walls of the canyon, 2,500 feet high, are of marble, of many beautiful colors, often polished. . . ."

For the 1889 Robert Brewster Stanton expedition, however, Marble Canyon proved a chamber of horrors. Three men drowned here on Stanton's first attempt to navigate the Colorado. In 1890, at the beginning of Stanton's second attempt, expedition photographer Franklin Nims fell 20 feet and nearly died. Stanton and his crew broke their journey to evacuate Nims via Rider Canyon. Our trip follows their route in reverse, from rim to river.

After maneuvering through the boulders at the top of the trail, we pick our way down a steep slope fully exposed to the sun. Our loaded packs threaten to tip us as scree skitters out from under our feet. High above, a rock gargoyle grins evilly at our discomfort.

A faint trail winds through prickly pear cacti and ephedra (Mormon tea) and around rockfalls. We reach the canyon floor and look up at the rim, 700 feet above, but can't pick out our route from this perspective. We talk of the men who hauled Nims up this steep slope in a litter made of oars, driftwood and canvas. While Nims slipped in and out of consciousness, bleeding from his ears and nose and his leg broken, did they scan the rim above, worried about being trapped in this rocky prison? We mark our exit route with a branch, hoping we won't miss it on our return.

The canyon captures and reflects midday heat while we scramble over rocks and around beds of dehydrating mud. Fossils — a scallop-shaped brachiopod and ancient sea lilies called crinoids — prove that life here has stretched over eons. A female collared lizard zips in front of us like a miniature dinosaur, and hoptree scents the air with heady sweetness.

As we gradually descend toward the river, the canyon floor changes to long stretches of sandstone.

Eventually, we settle into an awkward rhythm, stopping for photos, adjusting our packs, when the sandstone ends in an 8-foot drop. We decide to climb around, but another drop soon forces us to remove our packs and lower them with the rope, a tedious maneuver that we repeat several times. Nearing the river, we encounter small pools. Tracks, from insect to coyote, surround the ephemeral water. Tiny toads hop across slick expanses of mud.

Canyon walls change from talus slope to the cliff-forming Supai group. Long stairsteps of reddish sandstone lead ever downward toward the river, tantalizing us with thoughts of a cool soak.

According to the ranger who sold us our backcountry permit, we are the only hikers in Rider Canyon, and the last river trip would challenge House Rock Rapids by midday. Visions of the private paradise ahead keep us moving. Until . . . our sandstone staircase abruptly stops 6 feet above a 20-foot-wide pool in a slickrock bowl with sheer walls on either side.

We drop our packs and ponder our fate. It's already late afternoon, but the river can't be far away. Muddy tracks on one side of the murky pool show that river runners hiked upcanyon and stopped, unable to negotiate this obstacle — evidence that doesn't bode well for our return trip, even if we manage to cross now. We

[TOP] The sharp cleft of Rider Canyon meets the Colorado River at the center of this view, a photograph made from the opposite side of the Grand Canyon on the South Rim.
[ABOVE] The showy white blossoms of the datura contrast with the deadly toxins released when the plant is ingested.
[RIGHT] The Rider Canyon trail careens between rugged sandstone walls on its way to the river.

[LEFT] Rainwater collects in transient pools along the flood-scoured sandstone bed of Rider Canyon.

CLINGING TO THE EDGE of the pourover while he wobbles in the mud below, I lower the packs toward him before taking the plunge myself. AFTER TWICE SLIDING BACK DOWN INTO THE BOWL OF CHILLY WATER, I CLIMB OUT, shivering with relief.

change into river sandals and, in a foolish gesture of commitment, toss our boots across the pool.

Larry braves the cold water first. "It's deep in the middle, and over here it's solid mud," he warns from the other side.

Clinging to the edge of the pourover while he wobbles in the mud below, I lower the packs toward him before taking the plunge myself. After twice sliding back down into the bowl of chilly water, I climb out, shivering with relief. Three more times we encounter deep pools in the carved and fluted stone. The last, 40 feet long, cuts through sheer walls only a room's width apart. We have to climb high above, along a narrow ledge that plunges 30 feet to still water below.

Now we can hear the Colorado's whisper, the muted rush of House Rock Rapids. Though the sound beckons, we feel reluctant to leave this passage of dark-red stone, shady and secret. But other obstacles might await and, with sunset an hour away, we dare not linger. We pass through the narrows, hushed by the realization we are utterly alone in this magnificent place.

We turn a corner and see the canyon's mouth. The final test is a simple maze of willow and tamarisk trees. We step out of the brush onto buff-colored sand that slopes down to a clear lagoon, a pool of quiet water above the tumultuous rapids. The walls of Marble Canyon soar high above us, golden with late light.

Across the field of boulders fanning out from Rider Canyon, House Rock Rapids boil in a froth of blue-green and white. The roar drowns out our voices. Larry goes back to work with tripod and camera, and I cross to the main beach, scrambling up a massive boulder to look down at the surging water, one of the upper canyon's most challenging rapids. A standing wave hangs high above a churning hole, while fierce lateral waves crash along the beach.

As the last light creeps up the walls, Larry and I meet back at camp for a swim in the lagoon's chilly waters. After dinner, we lie back in our sleeping bags, looking up at the stars. Light flickers on the cliffs across river, proof that thunderstorms still threaten. In case of rain, we keep the tent nearby. We are talking nervously of flash floods, when a rustling noise interrupts our conversation.

I turn on the flashlight. Brown eyes stare back at me from a triangular face topped with large ears — a ringtail. Our food hangs high enough to deter packrats, but our efforts prove no match for him. With the grace of a cat and the cleverness of a monkey, he goes to work, ignoring the flashlight's beam.

Larry gets up to rig the bag again, while the ringtail watches closely from a nearby perch. When we next turn on the flashlight, he is standing on the sand, stretching up, bag just out of reach. He investigates various options, entertaining us until we decide our breakfast is safe and switch off the light.

But sleep comes fitfully. Roaring rapids, rustling bushes and flashing lightning mix with thoughts of the hike out. In the gray hours before dawn, men's voices startle me from a doze. Thinking an early raft trip might have pulled in to scout the rapids, I open my eyes. The beach is deserted. Puzzled, I drift back to sleep.

Morning reveals a new threat. Our clear lagoon is silty gray from the night's storms. Grimly, we fill as many water bottles as we can before our filter clogs.

"We'd better head out before it gets any hotter," Larry warns.

We make it through the narrows without the rope and get across the bowl-shaped pool in under an hour. It's an uphill race against the sun and, for me, from an eerie sense of doom. I tell Larry about the voices. He confesses that he also heard voices the evening before. A trick of the rapids? Or the echoes of Stanton's men, discussing how to deal with Nims, "whose moans harmonized in chilling rhythm with the wind. . . ."

In January 1890, they battled sandy gusts and ice-forming cold. Our circumstances couldn't be more different: The sun beats down relentlessly as the canyon opens up. We stop frequently and drink, always measuring our remaining water against the climb out. At one stop, we compete with a pair of chuckwallas for the meager shade of a boulder. They hide in a dark crevice at our intrusion.

We welcome the sight of the branch marking the route up. By the time we climb the steep talus onto the rim, my legs are quivering. I think of the relief Stanton's men felt when they stood on this very spot. Mine is mixed with a sense of triumph. We grin at each other, a little goofily.

How fortunate we are compared to Nims, who woke from his ordeal a week later to learn that he'd been cut from the expedition's payroll and expected to fund his own way home, while the rest of the crew continued downriver with his camera. AH

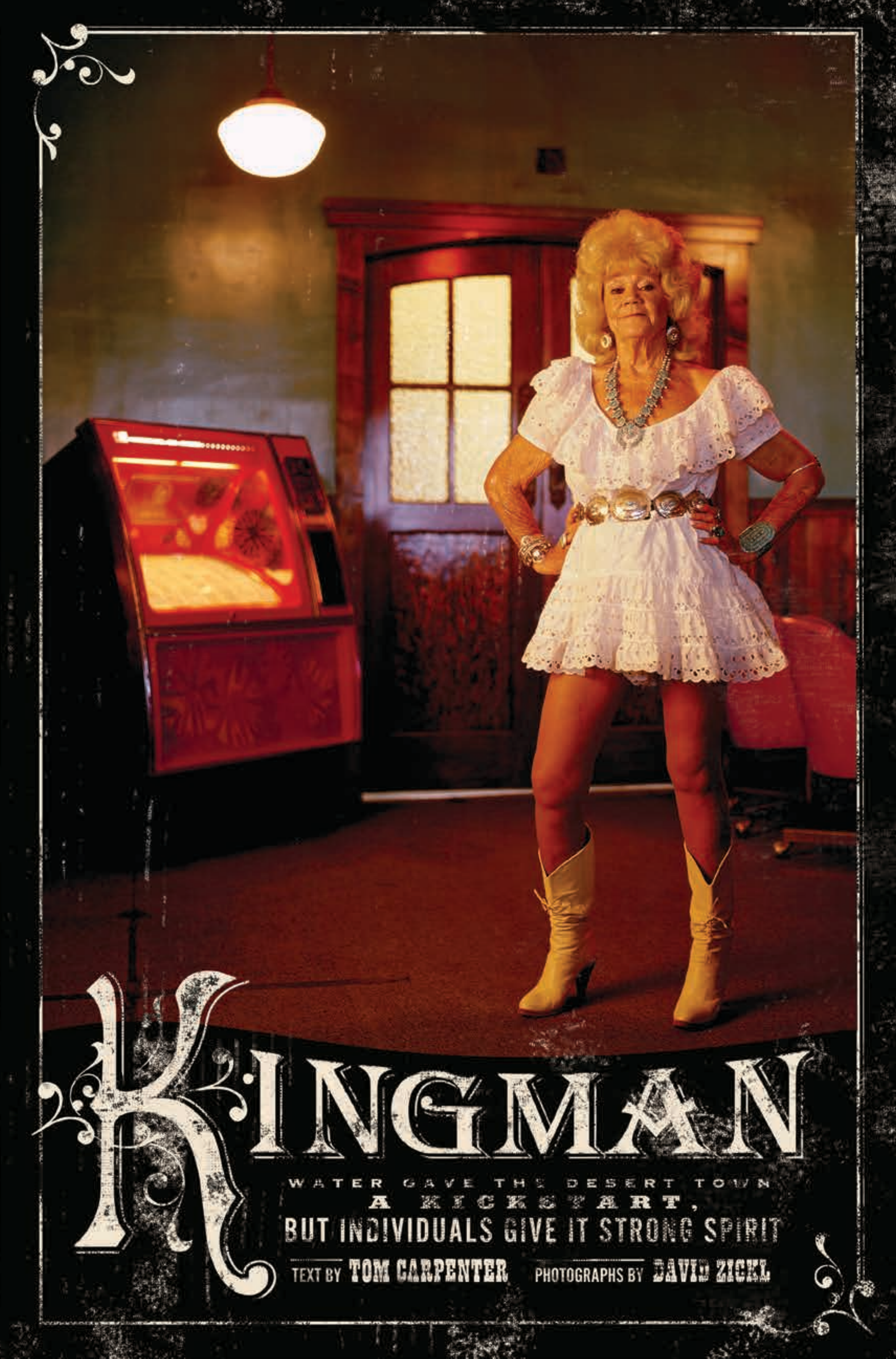
Although Kathleen Bryant of Sedona is an experienced hiker, she considers Rider Canyon the toughest 5.5 miles she's ever traveled — and the most breathtaking in every way.

Larry Lindahl of Sedona was first enchanted by Rider Canyon when he hiked it during a February rafting trip. He enjoyed the revisit on this trip in warmer weather.

EDITOR'S NOTE: For those who would like to learn to take professional landscape photographs like those in this issue, the Friends of *Arizona Highways* has two photo workshops that will interest you. One, led by photographer Chuck Lawson from October 3 to October 7, will concentrate on shooting autumn color on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. The other, led by Richard Maack, the magazine's photography editor, will visit the slot canyons of northern Arizona, October 20 to October 24. For information and reservations, call (888) 790-7042, or visit the group's Web site at www.friendsofazhighways.com.

when you go

LOCATION: Approximately 150 miles north of Flagstaff.
GETTING THERE: From Flagstaff, drive north on U.S. Route 89 to Bitter Springs. Continue north and then west on U.S. Route 89A. Crossing the Colorado River, go about 10 miles past Cliff Dwellers Lodge, then turn left (south) onto the first road past Milepost 557. The dirt road forks left (east) several times, dwindling to a rocky two-track that requires a high-clearance vehicle. A good map or guidebook is essential for following the 12-mile route to the trailhead.
TRAVEL ADVISORY: A backcounty permit is required to camp in Marble Canyon, which lies within the boundaries of Grand Canyon National Park. Campfires are not allowed, and backpackers must adhere to guidelines minimizing impact.
WARNING: Depending on season and weather, this canyoneering experience may require wading, swimming, scrambling, rock climbing and route finding. Dangerous heights and extreme temperatures are possible. Carry plenty of water, in addition to a filter for use with any local water source.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Backcountry Office, Grand Canyon National Park, (928) 638-7888, www.thecanyon.com.



KINGMAN

WATER GAVE THE DESERT TOWN
A KICKSTART,
BUT INDIVIDUALS GIVE IT STRONG SPIRIT

TEXT BY **TOM CARPENTER** PHOTOGRAPHS BY **DAVID ZICKL**

THE SCENT OF WATER **RISES FROM A PURLING STREAM**
BENEATH THE GRASSY MOUSTACHE ON A LIP OF STONE.
BARELY 2 YARDS WIDE, LESS THAN HALF THAT DEEP,
THE COLD SPRING RUNS **CLEAR AS TRUTH.**

A mesquite blossom pirouettes upon an eddy and floats toward reeds 20 yards away where the stream flows back underground. The surrounding hills stand dark and dry, and filaree roots reach no moisture.

Drawn by the scent, birds and mammals embroider the damp bank with their tracks. Some are fresh, like those made by my boots, and some are fading. Others, the ones accumulated since the Earth winced and opened this tear duct in the hard countenance of the Cerbat Mountains, only the mud remembers.

This spring and others in Kingman have been gurgling for at least 10,000 years, when humans first occupied the area. The story of Kingman — the why, the how and the who — is really the story of these springs, of this water.

In northwestern Arizona, elevation 3,333 feet, Kingman lies in a gap between the Cerbat and Hualapai mountains. Interstate 40, U.S. Route 93 and U.S. Route 66 intersect in that gap. For many travelers, Kingman is an enigma. They ask, "Hot ain't it?" and "How far to Vegas/California?" And they wonder, "Why would anyone live here?" With 36,000 people living in and around the city, there must be a reason.

An ancient trade route through the Kingman area linked the Pueblo tribes to the east with the Pacific Coast tribes. In 1776, Father Francisco Tomas Garces, a Franciscan missionary, drank from the springs on his way to the Hopi mesas north of present-day Flagstaff. Yet the springs remained a remote respite on a faint footpath until 1857 when Lt. Edward Beale passed through the area with a survey crew and 25 camels to mark a road following the 35th parallel that would provide emigrants with an alternative winter route.

Gold was discovered in the area in 1862. The mountains soon swarmed with miners, and

[PRECEDING PANEL, PAGES 14 AND 15] Photographed at the Nighthawk Saloon within the historic, though now-abandoned Hotel Beale in Kingman, karaoke singer Juanita Bastian performs with style. [ABOVE] Humorist Bob Boze Bell was told by an English teacher that he would "regret not paying attention in her class." In 1986, he sent her a copy of his first book of cartoons saying it proved her point "beyond a shadow of a doubt." [RIGHT] Rose Larsen, owner of Rosie's Den at Milepost 28 on U.S. Route 93, cooks everything from scratch, including the sauce for her barbecued pork steak and the home fried potatoes she "grates right on the grill."

[ABOVE] Tim Parker (left) with Michelle and Bob Hall form the Homemade Jam Band and play bluegrass music at venues around Kingman. [RIGHT] With roots in Mohave County going back to 1930 and earlier, members of the 130-strong Daughters of Mohave County Pioneers (from left, standing) Margie Cornwall, Verna Wright, Madeline McVey, Ruthie Bishop and Celia Morton pose in the bed of a 1950 Studebaker pickup truck driven by Gracie Neal at Neal's Long Mountain Ranch.

mining towns dotted the slopes. The Hualapai Indians, many of whom lived near the springs, rebelled against the encroachment. The murder of a Hualapai chief at the springs in 1866 precipitated a war that lasted until 1871, when the U.S. Army established an outpost, Camp Beale Springs.

Loren Wilson, a former high school teacher and now a volunteer at the museum, has been instrumental in the restoration of Camp Beale Springs.

"When I retired from teaching 15 years ago, people asked me where I would go to retire," he said, grinning. "With these mountains and the river and the good people, where else would I want to go?"

The Atlantic and Pacific Railroad followed the Beale wagon road. The project surveyor, Lewis Kingman, noted the springs on his map as "Kingman siding." In 1883, trains began stopping there for water.

Kingman has always been a tough town, as rough as Tombstone or Bisbee, but without the publicity. Take equal parts miners, ranchers and railroad men, add whiskey and heat to a boil, and you have a recipe for a rough Saturday night.

"To me, Kingman is the Wild West, and always has been," said Bob Boze Bell, editor of *True West* magazine. Bell was reared in Kingman. "Most of the folks are bighearted and wonderful. Of course there are some big, fat jerks, but, fortunately, most of them are either my relatives or lifelong friends."

With its abundant water supply and the railroad, Kingman became a shipping and communications hub for Mohave County. The community weathered gold and silver market fluctuations better than the mining towns in the surrounding hills; still, relatively little of the wealth extracted from the mines, more than $93 million between 1863 and 1960, stayed in the community. As a result, Kingman's economy grew very little until the 1930s, when the construction of Boulder Dam and the road to it (now U.S. 93) opened new opportunities for employment and business growth.

During World War II, an airfield was built north of town for the Army Air Force Flexible Gunnery School. Approximately 35,000 airmen were trained as gunners for the B-17 Flying Fortress.

After the war, many of the servicemen returned to Kingman for the climate and for the opportunities provided. The completion of Interstate 40 through the area in the late 1970s diverted traffic from U.S. Route 66 to the outskirts of town, so businesses moved out to the turnpikes and the center of town shifted northward. As a consequence, Kingman has evolved into a regional trade, service and distribution center with tourism and manufacturing its leading industries.

Bill Jordan was born in Kingman in 1954. After living several years elsewhere in the state, he and his wife, Corene, returned to Kingman 12 years ago to raise their three children. Bill supports the current initiative toward reviving old downtown. "The older neighborhoods and business districts are monuments of the strong sense of community that prevailed throughout my youth," he said.

The Fountain Cafe thrives as part of that revival. On the last Friday of every month, the gourmet coffee shop hosts the Homemade Jam Band. Bob and Michelle Hall, along with fiddler Tim Parker, are mainstays of the bluegrass group, and all three have lived in Kingman for more than 20 years. Bob has been an endangered-species biologist and now works as a public affairs officer with the Bureau of Land Management. He said the area offers a great place to raise kids "with a terrific variety of outdoor activities." There are mountains for hiking and hunting, and lakes and rivers for fishing and boating, and all within less than an hour's drive.

Kingman shows off for itself twice a year. On the Fourth of July, the town puts on what it considers the most spectacular fireworks display in the state. Then, on the first weekend in October, Kingman hosts Andy Devine Days with a parade, a carnival and a rodeo. Character actor Andy Devine, who grew up in Kingman, played in films and on television. His memorable roles include the hapless marshal, Link Appleyard, in the 1962 movie *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*. The Mohave Museum of History and Arts displays a collection of his movie and television memorabilia that spans his career beginning in the late 1920s to just before his death in 1977.

Kingman is not all hard edges and hot sun. To expose the community's other sides, the museum offers a walking tour of the historic downtown district. A free map, a hat and plenty of water will make the stroll more pleasant.

Half a block east of the museum stands Locomotive Park. The huge locomotive No. 3759 made the pull both ways out of the Colorado River valley for more than 20 years. The Powerhouse Visitors Center stands across U.S. Route 66. Constructed in 1907 as a coal-fired generating station, the building has been renovated and now houses the Chamber of Commerce and the Historic Route 66 Museum. On display upstairs are several large-format photographs by the late Carlos Elmer, another hometown boy, and a frequent contributor to this magazine.

Not everyone who goes to Kingman stays there. It can be a prickly pear kind of place for those unaccustomed to an austere and windswept landscape. But those who do remain, like the Daughters of Mohave County Pioneers, know there is a reservoir of strength and beauty to be found there in this desert. Their spirits thrive like mesquite blossoms borne upon the face of clear water.

when you go

LOCATION: Approximately 145 miles west of Flagstaff.
GETTING THERE: From Flagstaff, travel west on Interstate 40. Exit 51 will take you to Andy Devine Avenue.
PHONE NUMBERS: Area code is 928.
FEES: A $3 admission includes the Bonelli House, Historic Route 66 Museum and the Mohave Museum of History and Arts. Donations are requested at the Kingman Army Airfield Museum. Admission to the Powerhouse Visitors Center is free.
ATTRACTIONS: Bonelli House, Monday through Friday, 11 A.M. to 3 P.M., 753-3195; Historic Route 66 Museum, daily, 9 A.M. to 6 P.M., 753-9889; Kingman Army Airfield Museum, Tuesday through Saturday, 11 A.M. to 4 P.M., 757-1892; Mohave Museum of History and Arts, Monday through Friday, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. and Saturday, 1 P.M. to 5 P.M., 753-3195; Powerhouse Visitors Center, daily, 9 A.M. to 6 P.M., 753-6106.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Kingman Area Chamber of Commerce, 753-6106, www.kingmantourism.org.

Flagstaff resident Tom Carpenter grew up in Kingman and visits his mother there every chance he gets.

David Zickl of Fountain Hills got a big kick out of photographing the people of Kingman. He spent so much time there he felt like an honorary citizen.

Discover PRIMEVAL *Splendor*

along the Little Colorado River's West Fork

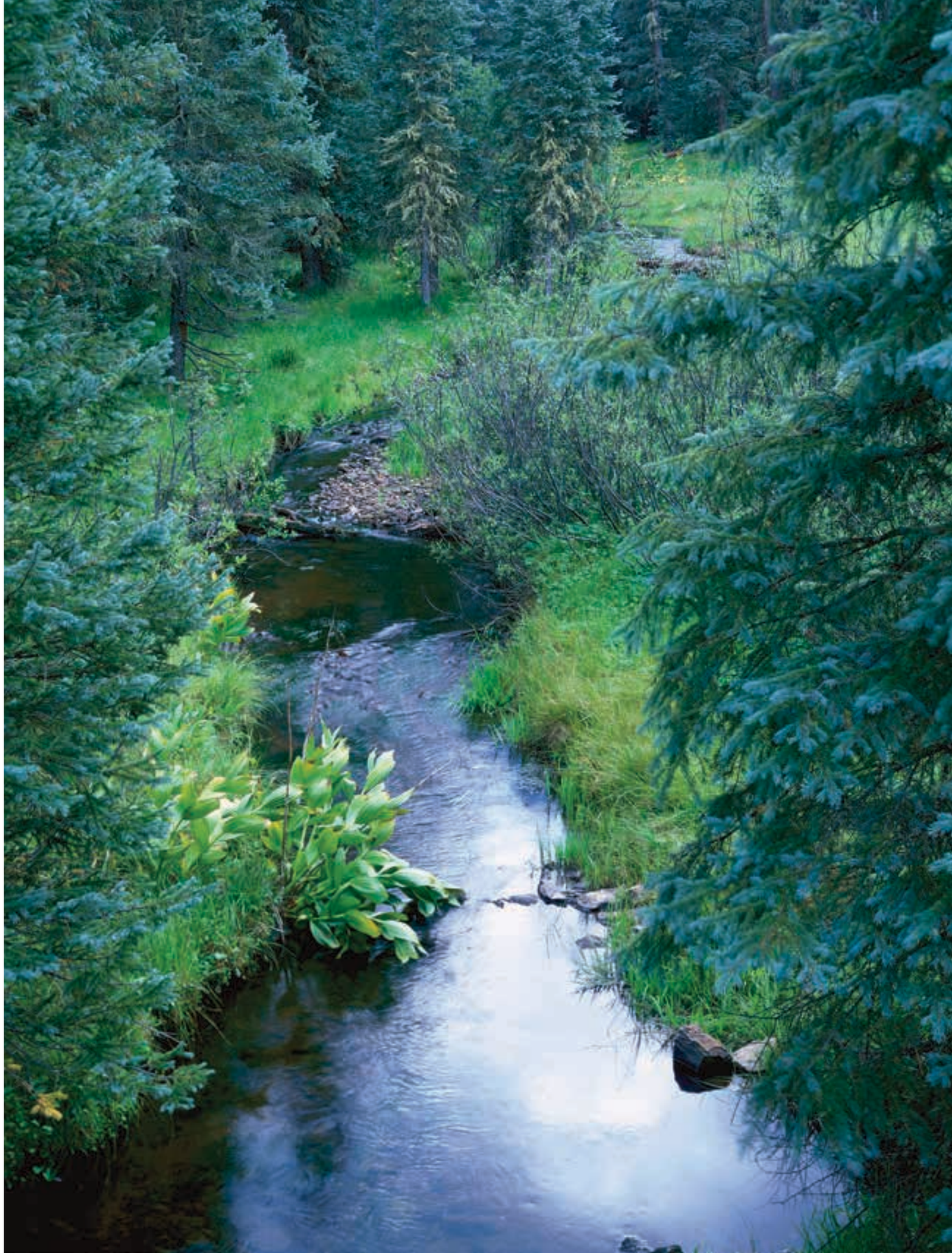
BY BRUCE GRIFFIN

TRAVELING FROM MY HOME in the low desert to hike along the West Fork of the Little Colorado River, I take extra pleasure from the cool air and spruce-fir forest that surrounds me here above 9,000 feet elevation.

Midsummer's monsoon is my favorite time to photograph here, when seasonal greening and flowering are at their maximum, thanks to almost-daily rainshowers. Billowy clouds signal the gathering storms, diffusing and softening the light. I prefer conditions like these for a variety of shots.

West Fork Trail starts in the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests near Greer and becomes *(Text continued on page 27)*

[PRECEDING PANEL, PAGES 20 AND 21] Lush, moss-covered rocks beckon the eye to climb upward toward a mixed conifer forest along the West Fork of the Little Colorado River in eastern Arizona. [CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE] The rich soil of the West Fork's riparian area nourishes moisture-loving plants such as yellow cutleaf coneflowers, New Mexican checkermallows and a variety of ferns and mosses. [OPPOSITE PAGE] Evoking a sense of pastoral serenity, the West Fork meanders through the spruce forest of the Mount Baldy Wilderness.



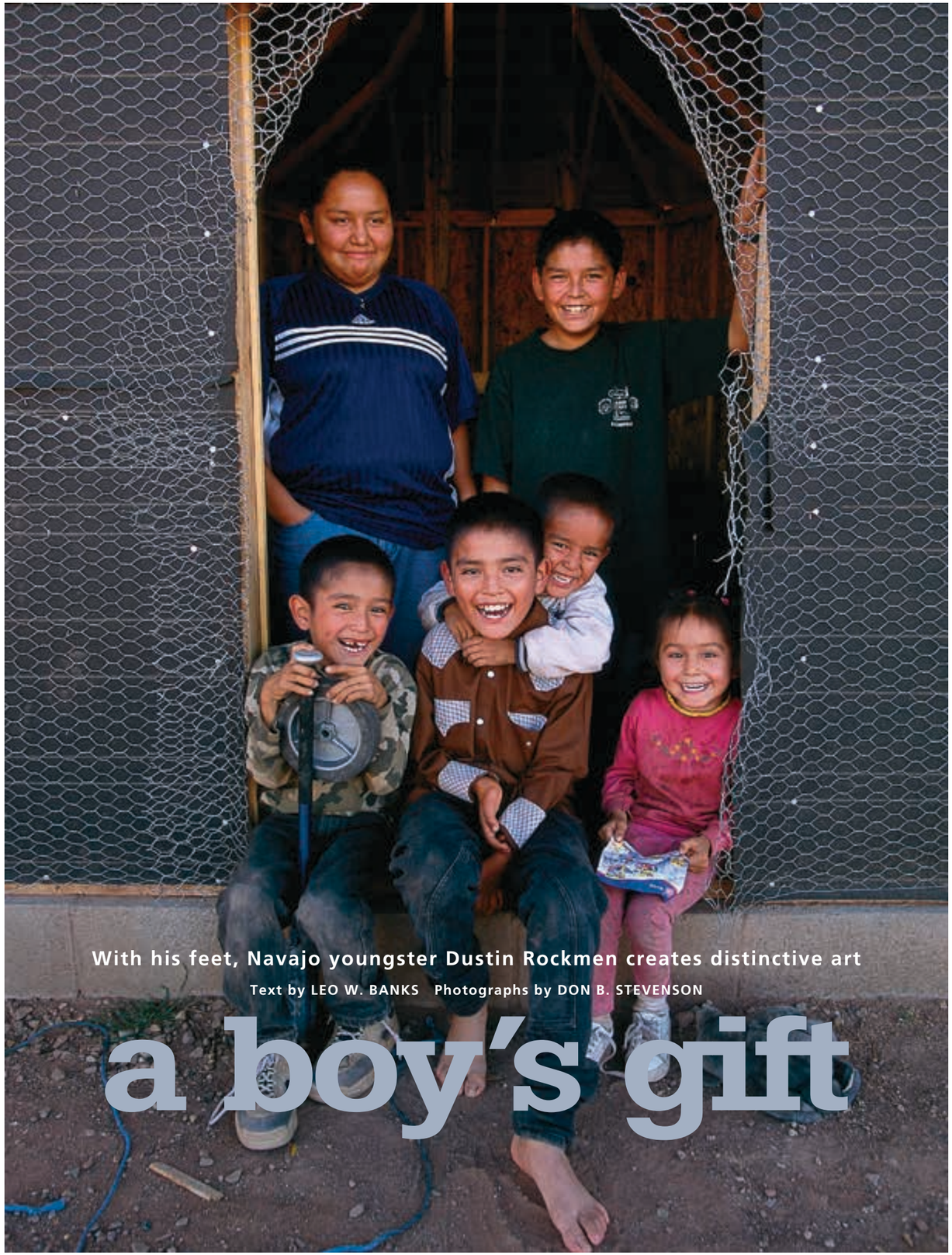
(Continued from page 22) the West Baldy Trail upon entering Mount Baldy Wilderness. The wilderness area is west of State Route 273, which crosses the river near Sheep Crossing, a descriptive name that recalls earlier times when desert sheep ranchers drove their herds to abundant summer pastures in the White Mountains of eastern Arizona.

As I move off the trail and involve myself with the surrounding landscape, time is forgotten. At first, I set aside the bulky view camera and work with my 35 mm camera, discovering what the forest floor has to offer. Lichens, ferns, mosses and fungi — including mushrooms large and small — proliferate in the cool, moist loam along the river's course. Some prefer fallen logs to soil as a substrate. Unbeknown to me, a spider has crawled inside the view camera and has spun a thick web. When I discover this later, it makes for some interesting troubleshooting.

The canyon cut by the river is a work in progress, with frequent deadfalls and log tangles.

The untouched wilderness evokes primeval beauty, especially on a misty summer afternoon. This is my time, the reason I come here. I enjoy the tranquility, and I am in no hurry to leave.

[PRECEDING PANEL, PAGES 24 AND 25] Wildflowers — including Western red raspberries, cutleaf coneflowers, shrubby cinquefoils, water hemlocks and geraniums — upstage a backdrop of moss-draped spruce trees along the West Fork. [LEFT] The eye-catching appeal of ruby red baneberries sends a mixed message: Look but don't eat. The berries are poisonous. [THIS PAGE] The damp mountain environment makes a perfect home for mushrooms like *Amanita muscaria*, also known as fly agaric (top); *Mycena sp.* (above); and *Gymnopus dryophilus* (right).



With his feet, Navajo youngster Dustin Rockmen creates distinctive art

Text by LEO W. BANKS Photographs by DON B. STEVENSON

a boy's gift

DUSTIN ROY ROCKMEN lives below a tall bluff where eagles nest. He often sees the great birds soaring above his home at Hunters Point, south of Window Rock on the Navajo Indian Reservation, and he studies them, letting their size and majesty swell his imagination. Then he paints them.

It's what artists do, even sixth graders. They paint the world revealed to them, and for Dustin that means the community's hogans, his aunt's sheep, the red mesas that fill the horizon.

Right now, with fat clouds overhead and rain beginning to fall, Dustin seeks shelter inside the Rockmen family home. He clears a space on the dirt floor for his paper and pencils. His subject this day has nothing to do with his surroundings.

I've asked him to sketch my portrait. "You have to make me look handsome," I say, adding a wisecrack about the enormity of the task.

Dustin's face sparkles and he breaks into a wide, dimpled grin. He turns toward his mom, Linda. "I know, I'll make him a horse,"

he says. "Maybe I'll give him a tail, too."

"Oh, Dusty," she says, covering her eyes.

Everyone laughs, and this remarkable 12-year-old boy, the most talked-about artist on the reservation, an award-winning painter prevented by a disability from using his hands, gets down to work.

At 18 months old, Dustin suffered a rare spinal-cord stroke caused by restricted blood flow due to swelling. Reservation doctors arranged to airlift him to St. Joseph's Hospital in Phoenix.

Linda Rockmen remembers those first terrible hours, watching her stricken son lying motionless in bed, his survival doubtful. Relatives of his Apache father, Jerome, born in Whiteriver on the White Mountain Apache Reservation, rushed to the Valley to donate their blood.

"That whole first day afterward, he didn't move," says Linda.

On the second day, Dustin stirred, and the Rockmens had hope that their boy would pull through. But they got bad news, too. Doctors said he would no longer have use of his arms.

Now they droop from his shoulders, crooked at the elbows. His wrists angle sideways, and he can't manipulate his fingers to grab things.

But the stroke left intact something that doctors and medical tests can't measure — Dustin's extraordinary spirit and ability to overcome challenges, a grit that sometimes finds its way into the human heart.

Within three days, he began using his feet. Doctors put toys on his hospital bed,

[OPPOSITE PAGE] Hugged by his sister Kenzie, Dustin Rockmen sits in the doorway of a hogan under construction near his home on the Navajo Indian Reservation in northeastern Arizona, surrounded by some of his other siblings (clockwise from bottom left): Justin, Rochelle, Junior and Edith. [LEFT] Dustin demonstrates his technique for drawing by holding a pencil between his toes. Dustin creates art with a personal style, such as the sunflower (far left) and the cowboy (below) on display at the Perry Null Trading Co. in Gallup, New Mexico.
PAINTINGS COURTESY OF PERRY NULL TRADING CO.

and he'd play with them using his toes.

Later, Linda spent eight months with Dustin at a rehabilitation facility in Tucson. She keeps pictures of that stay in a notebook.

One shows Dustin, then almost 2 years old, in a wheelchair. He could gain speed only by kicking his feet, but zipping down the corridor he'd go, roaring along in his tiny wheelchair, nurses laughing and running after him — a toddler bringing joy to a difficult time.

"I don't know about that boy of mine, but he's always been that way," says Linda.

As time wore on, he got better and better at working his toes like fingers, and today he uses them to draw.

The rain has brought Dustin's younger siblings in from the front yard, too. The 5-year-old twins, Kenzie and Edith, bound crazily about the cramped room.

Dustin is sitting beside the kitchen table. His drawing paper rests on a board that lies flat on the dirt at his feet. He is gripping his pencil between the first two toes of his right foot and deftly steering it across the paper.

Shoulders hunched, face scrunched in

concentration, he works slowly and calmly amid the chaos of Kenzie and Edith's playing and squealing.

"Oops," he says. "I made a mistake. Better fix that."

Dustin — sometimes known by his family nickname "Taazhi," Navajo for turkey — sweeps his eraser off the table with his bent right arm, snatches it with his feet and maneuvers it between the toes of his right foot to rub away his error. He shows amazing dexterity.

"I like my new socks, Mama," he says. "My toes are nice and warm."

Linda made a special trip to the Wal-Mart in Gallup to buy him socks with individual toes. Without them, his feet get too cold to draw during the winter.

For the Rockmens, buying much of anything has been tough. Jerome, 45, suffered a stroke within months of his son's, and later had a heart attack.

He needs oxygen to sleep at night, and on doctor's order cannot work. The family gets by on Social Security disability. But it doesn't go far.

Jerome has just left in their pickup truck to pawn Linda's turquoise cluster bracelet. It usually brings $30, enough for tomorrow's laundry and some food. When their next check comes, she'll buy it back.

Dustin's art has brought some money to the family — usually $50 to $100 for paintings sold here and there — and his renown is growing.

Indian Health Service officials in Kayenta recently asked him to paint a Monument Valley scene for use on T-shirts and mugs. He'll earn $50 for that piece.

Dustin scored big at last year's art competition at the Navajo Nation Fair. Against 75 other entries, he won best of show, best of class and a first-place ribbon, along with $500 in prize money.

Linda makes sure that any money her boy makes returns to him to pay for clothes and necessities.

But this time, even though Dustin's arms prevented him from going on the rides at the fair, he insisted that a portion of his prize money go to buy tickets so his brothers and sisters could ride.

Dustin spent much of his childhood until age 5 wearing a helmet because he couldn't balance himself, making falls troublesome, and he has undergone two arm surgeries.

"At first I said no more operations," says Linda. "We were afraid we might not bring him home." But doctors believed they could help him.

Unsure whether to proceed, Linda visited Richard Charles, her grandfather who lives near Window Rock, and asked him to perform a Native American Church ceremony for Dustin. The all-night service, which involves consuming a drink laced with the hallucinogen peyote, took place inside a teepee that Charles had built outside the Rockmen home.

After all the prayers were said, Jerome and Linda still weren't sure what to do. Then she watched Charles taking down the teepee poles, and to her amazement she saw then-4-year-old Dustin helping.

[ABOVE] Eager to encourage Dustin, Perry Null purchased this painting, in which the young artist captured the joy of eating watermelon. PERRY NULL [OPPOSITE PAGE, ABOVE] Just as Window Rock, a Navajo Nation scenic landmark, offers sky vistas through a sandstone arch, Dustin's artwork presents unique views of his world. [OPPOSITE PAGE, BELOW] During their visit, Dustin sketched *The Handsome Horse Man*, a whimsical portrait of author Leo W. Banks.

Charles had strapped the rope between the boy's fingers and told him to walk backward to unravel it, praying as he walked. When Linda saw that, she and Jerome agreed to let the surgeons proceed.

"I witnessed a miracle that day," Linda remembers. "Dusty had never used his hands before. Right then I knew he'd use them again."

The prayer meeting stood out for Dustin, too. The first paintings he ever sold — at the Navajo Nation Fair in 1998 — depicted that same Native American Church teepee next to his hogan at Hunter's Point.

The surgeries haven't helped Dustin's left arm but have given him some use of his right arm. He can grip a fork between his forefinger and middle finger to feed himself, and at the Tse Ho Tso School in Fort Defiance, he uses his pinky to tap the computer keyboard.

To accomplish other tasks, such as pulling a T-shirt over his head, he needs help. But those around him marvel at his determination.

On a school trip last fall, he won a silver medal in a Special Olympics swim meet in Phoenix. He wore a life jacket and floated on his back, propelling himself with his legs.

"He's a normal little boy who wants to be like the other kids," says Arletta Hartmann, Dustin's former preschool teacher who still mentors him. "The only magic about him is what he does with his feet."

Hartmann has taken Dustin under her wing, enrolling him in art classes, and twice a month she takes him to her house for a meal and quiet time to paint.

They have a special relationship. He calls her Grandma. "Dusty was the bright spark in my class," Hartmann says.

Sometimes the two drive to Gallup and visit galleries and trading posts along Route 66. Every new shape and color he sees sends a spark through his imagination. "I like the designs on the big pottery," he says.

Hartmann also brought him to the attention of Art of the People, a collective of top Indian artists formed to promote the arts in the Four Corners region. In December its members take part in a student competition at the Gallup Cultural Center, sponsored by the Southwest Indian Foundation.

Two years ago, Hartmann entered one of Dustin's paintings in the foundation's second show. Well-known Navajo painter Irving Toddy, a founder of Art of the People, served as a judge, and remembers Dustin's watercolor landscape as an outstanding example of craftsmanship and coordination of colors. He called it delicately and professionally done.

Toddy looked forward to meeting Dustin at the awards ceremony to ask how he pulled off such a fine painting.

"Then he walked in, and I saw he could not use his arms," says Toddy. "I was totally overwhelmed that he could execute that way with his feet. He's an amazing young man."

Dustin won first place for that watercolor of a sunset, along with a $2,500 scholarship. He won first place again the following year for his painting of a horse.

After meeting him, Toddy and other Art of the People members took Dustin into their group. Several continue to meet him in mentoring sessions, including the noted painter Baje Whitethorn.

"His style is fresh and very simple," says Whitethorn. "I keep telling him simplicity is beautiful, and that's what he's going for. He'll develop because he has the drive and knows what he wants. His palette is wide open."

Wood sculptor Dan Yazzie finds it amazing that high-caliber artists give their time to help Dustin. Talent plays a part, he says, but the sparkle of Dustin's personality factors in, too.

"If I had a grin like his every day of my life, I wouldn't have a thing to worry about," says Yazzie. "Then I watch him work and it makes me want to get down on my knees and pray. It reminds me that there's a higher spirit watching over us. I get chills up and down my spine thinking about it."

THE RAIN IS FALLING harder now, and a cold wind blows off the mesas. Daylight will soon be gone, leaving Dustin to work by butane lamp. Financial troubles have left the Rockmens with no electricity or heat. They truck drinking water home in barrels from Blue Canyon, a 28-mile round trip.

But Dustin is nearing the end of his portrait. His foot has cramped, which happens sometimes. He often listens to country music to soothe his mind as he draws. He loves Johnny Cash, and don't get him started on George Strait.

"I love it when George Strait sings, 'where the sidewalk ends and the road begins,'" Dustin says. "Do you know that song? I really like that one. I sing along."

He's finished now and proceeds to sign his work. He steadies the eraser end of the pencil between his chin and neck, and guides the point with his right hand, which he lays flat behind the pencil.

Dustin signs his name that way around strangers because he's bashful about taking off his socks. The signature takes 10 minutes. The letters emerge beautifully formed.

In the sketch, he has portrayed me with the head of a horse and the body of a human. I love it.

"But we need a title," I say. "What'll we call it?"

"*The Horse Man*," he says. After pondering that, he smiles, his face all teeth and dimples, and adds, "Wait, let's call it *The Handsome Horse Man*."

The sketch goes aloft for everyone to see, and we all laugh from our bellies, shining this young artist's bright light over a dark night at Hunter's Point. AH

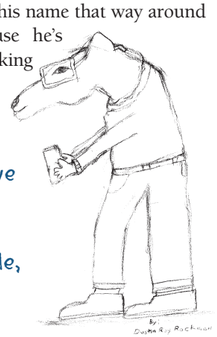
EDITOR'S NOTE: After interviewing for this story, the Rockmen family received a new modular home provided by the Southwest Indian Foundation. Dustin's art may be seen at the Perry Null Trading Co., 1710 S. 2nd St., Gallup, NM, 87301; (505) 863-5249 or (505) 722-3806; www.pntrader.com.

Leo W. Banks keeps Dusty's drawing, The Handsome Horse Man, *in a treasured place in his Tucson home. He enjoyed meeting and getting to know all the Rockmen children. He also wrote the history story about the Confederates fighting the Apaches and the Back Road Adventure in this issue.*

Don B. Stevenson of Tempe travels the Navajo Indian Reservation often. He found his visit with Dustin Rockmen not only enjoyable but inspirational.

THE HANDSOME HORSE MAN

I've asked him to sketch my portrait. "You have to make me look handsome," I say, adding a wisecrack about the enormity of the task. Dustin's face sparkles and he breaks into a wide, dimpled grin. "I know, I'll make him a horse. Maybe I'll give him a tail, too."



Tracking the Reclusive Tiger – and Trying Not to

Get Rattled

TEXT BY KATHLEEN WALKER PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL & JOYCE BERQUIST

THEY STAY HIDDEN from view for months at a time, eluding all but the best tracker, and Matt Goode has to be the best. He has been tracking the tigers in the foothills around Tucson since 1997. Funny how challenging that can be considering these tigers have no legs. What Matt Goode's tigers have is rattles and an aura of mystery. What Matt Goode has is the desire to know more about them — the secretive tiger rattlesnakes of the Sonoran Desert. "The tiger rattlesnake is kind of an enigmatic species," he says. "Nobody's ever studied them in detail."

While completing his doctorate in wildlife and fishery sciences, Goode utilized technology and a grant from the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Heritage Fund to peer into the private world of the tigers. He has implanted radio transmitters in more than 30 snakes in Tucson's foothills to monitor their lives and their eccentricities.

"They actually don't do much of anything," he admits. They find something to eat, he says, then hang out, build up fat, save energy.

"And, as rattlesnakes go, I think they're even a little more couch potatoes than many other species," he concludes.

His subjects are limited to the Sonoran Desert of northern Mexico and the Tucson-Phoenix area. In Mexico, they may live as low as sea level, but in Arizona they are found only in higher elevations and foothills, those rocky places with a view.

Tigers have a home range, land on which they live out their lives, spending every winter in the same den, alone. Adults average 2 to 3 feet long. They have the smallest head relative to body size of any rattlesnake, and at the other end, an equally disproportionate sized rattle — a big one. Their skins are banded in a palette of gray and brown desert colors.

As laid-back as they seem most of the year, they do have their moments of enthusiasm. When summer monsoons and the natural urges roll around, it's Katy, bar the gate.

"Boy, when the mating season comes, they're moving all over the place," Goode reports with the smile of a true snake voyeur.

The tigers cut to the age-old chase, up hill and dale and across the rocks of their foothill homes. One male in Saguaro National Park east of Tucson took off running, make that slithering, like a snake on a hot rock.

"And he went over 2 miles . . . way farther than anybody else has ever gone," Goode states. "He found a few females along the way."

The range-roving Romeo disappeared from Goode's study, having possibly found his promised land.

Tigers aren't predictable. Why did one fellow get up in the middle of hibernation and change dens?

What about females who seek a variety of partners instead of being content with picking just the best one?

Who cares?

Goode cares. He hopes his work will lead to better management of snakes as they face human encroachment.

For several years in Arizona, no deaths were officially attributed to rattlesnake bites, but a deadly encounter occurred less than two years ago. Snakebite survivors can suffer serious damage — tissue loss and motion loss in the bitten body part. Humans play a role in these unfortunate meetings.

Jude McNally, managing director of the Arizona Poison and Drug Information Center, says, "Fifty percent [of snakebite victims] saw the snake, recognized the snake as a venomous snake, and then they went after it."

"Oh, it's a rattlesnake," Goode says of the frequent reaction. "I gotta kill it."

Goode's passion went in the opposite direction after being introduced to rattlers while a University of Wyoming student. The school needed someone to clean the prairie rattlesnake cage, a cage big enough to hold a man. Oddly, they weren't overrun with applicants. Then came Goode.

"This is cool, man," Goode recalls thinking. "I can't believe I got this job."

Twenty-five years later, he's still ankle-deep in snakes, hiking through desert washes, climbing rocks, carrying his transmitter. He listens for beeps emitted from the guts of the earth and the tigers, and he wonders what they've been up to.

"They're doing things behind my back," he only half jokes.

Goode has found the tigers' babies only once and has never seen the males fight for a female's attention. These snakes still keep secrets.

"I guess I do worry about it," he says of their future. He emphasizes co-existence but admits, "Society hasn't put a huge priority on keeping snakes around."

No, but not every snake has a champion like Matt Goode, a bit nosy perhaps, but a champion nonetheless. AH

Kathleen Walker coexists with the tiger rattlesnake on her own home range in the Tucson foothills.

Tucsonan Paul Berquist was accompanied by his wife, Joyce, on many of the locations to photograph the rattlesnakes during this assignment. She kept telling him, "Watch out! You're too close!"

[OPPOSITE PAGE, ABOVE] Dinner for a tiger rattlesnake involves biting a small mammal or reptile, injecting it with venom and holding it in its mouth or releasing and tracking it until dies. A mouse should satisfy a tiger's appetite for a week or so.
[OPPOSITE PAGE, BELOW] University of Arizona herpetologist Matt Goode assigns each tiger rattlesnake a radio frequency and a three-digit number correlating with the three-color code he paints on its rattle.
[LEFT] Holding aloft a radio receiver that detects fluctuations in body temperature as well as location, Goode tracks a tiger's whereabouts and monitors changes in its activities.

THE AMBUSH OF JOHNNY REB

AT DRAGOON SPRINGS IN 1862, EVEN THE CONFEDERATES GOT A TASTE OF APACHE WAR

BY LEO W. BANKS

[LEFT] Spiky agaves and sotols, gritty rocks and a threatening sky present an inhospitable picture of the Dragoon Mountains in southeastern Arizona's Coronado National Forest. GEORGE STOCKING
[ABOVE] Confederate flag provided by Mark Shuttleworth, private collector. 2C IMAGERY

Confederate troops and Chiricahua Apaches. . . . It takes a while to get used to the idea that the unlikely groups met in battle in Arizona. Gray-uniformed Rebels taking on long-haired Indian warriors. Cochise vs. Johnny Reb.

These two storied fighting groups saw their interests collide, for the briefest time, at Dragoon Springs, a stage stop on the old Butterfield Overland Mail line. The evidence lies at my feet in four rock-mound graves. Three hold the remains of Confederate dead, the only Rebel deaths to occur during the Civil War in what is now Arizona.

A rock on one of the three Confederate graves bears a lightly etched inscription: "S. Ford, May 5, 1862."

The fourth grave, also marked, holds a Tucson boy identified in his etching only as "Richardo," perhaps a misspelling. Historians believe he might have been pressed unwillingly into service as a herder by the Rebel command.

These lonesome graves, each flying a Confederate flag, make a moving and thoroughly unexpected sight on this windswept rise overlooking the San Pedro River valley.

Part of the desolate beauty of Dragoon Springs, which lies 3 miles off Interstate 10 east of Benson, is that you arrive here on your own, without having to suffer the company of an intrusive, gabby tour guide. You park at the edge of a rocky dirt road and make a short hike to the ruins of a stage stop.

THE PLAN WAS bold AND YET doomed to fail, ALTHOUGH IT WORKED LONG ENOUGH TO PUT TUCSON UNDER A CONFEDERATE FLAG FOR SIX WEEKS.

If you can excuse the distant sight of interstate traffic, and the closer sight of the tiny settlement of Dragoon to the north, everything on this empty bluff looks as it did the day of the fight — unpretentious and unadorned, except for small historical markers.

Nothing intrudes on the experience. For that reason, I love this spot. You can relive history in its purest form, accompanied only by the wind through the rocks and dead men under the grass.

The story these graves tell unfolded amid an unlikely attempt by Confederate leaders to extend their power all the way to California.

The plan was bold and yet doomed to fail, although it worked long enough to put Tucson under a Confederate flag for six weeks.

Capt. Sherod Hunter, the leading figure in the Confederates' Arizona campaign, might have been attracted to the Southern cause by personal tragedies that had left him adrift. In 1857, while living in Lincoln County, Tennessee, and running a grocery business, he lost his wife and infant son in childbirth.

Twenty-three years old, too grief-stricken to remain in Tennessee, Hunter made his way to Kansas, where most accounts say he worked as a freighter. He later moved to Mesilla, New Mexico Territory, near present-day Las Cruces, to work a small farm, and his political allegiance eventually drew him to the Confederacy.

In July 1861, with the 4-month-old Civil War raging in the East, Rebel sympathies in the Southwest flared to action with Confederate Lt. Col. John R. Baylor's defeat of a Yankee force in west Texas, according to L. Boyd Finch's *Confederate Pathway to the Pacific*. His book, along with *The Civil War in the Western Territories*, by historian Ray Colton, provided the bulk of the information for this article.

The high-strung and aggressive Baylor followed his victory by declaring a swath of land as the Confederate Territory of Arizona. It stretched south to Mexico from near present-day Wickenburg, and from the Texas Plains west to the Colorado River. He named himself governor and Mesilla the capital.

Early in 1862, Baylor sent 180 of his Texas cavalrymen, led by Hunter, his most able volunteer, west to capture Tucson.

With the withdrawal of Federal troops from Tucson months before, Hunter rode into the Old Pueblo unopposed on February 28. The next day, March 1, the Rebel flag flew over town for the first time.

Hunter and his "mounted frontiersmen," as Finch calls them, garrisoned in Tucson while scouting to within 80 miles of the California border, the farthest western penetration of any Confederate troops.

But with a Yankee column of 2,400 men marching toward them from the west, Hunter could do little throughout March and April but harass his enemy, never stopping to engage the superior force in pitched battle.

Many historians record that the soldiers at Dragoon Springs were Hunter's troops retreating from Tucson, but Finch's account declares that by the time of the fight at the springs on May 5, Hunter's frontiersmen were still nine days from abandoning their attempted conquest of Arizona.

Even then, facing the steadfast march of the Yankee column from California, the daring Hunter continued believing he could hold his position in Arizona. The Rebels who fought at Dragoon Springs were part of a foraging party sent to hunt for stray cattle. They were heading back to Tucson when the Apaches struck in a surprise ambush. Hunter had remained at the Tucson garrison and did not participate in the fight. In the absence of a Confederate battle report, which historians have been unable to locate, we cannot know exactly what happened that day.

But it must have happened in lightning-quick fashion, the natural silence of this place shattered by war whoops as the renegades charged, possibly led by Cochise himself. If I'm guessing correctly, the Rebels felt paralyzing fear at the sight. Anyone would.

By 1862, with Federal troops withdrawn, Cochise's Apaches had turned this portion of Arizona into a bloody wasteland, and part of the Confederate mission was to stop their depredations.

With the Apaches' reputation stuck in their heads, the Rebels must have suffered the overwhelming and instantaneous sense that they'd reached their last day. But they were soldiers, and if they had to die, they'd do so fighting.

We know that the stage station, built in 1858 and abandoned in 1861, would have offered the soldiers shelter. But we don't know whether any of them made it to defensive positions behind the rock walls.

[LEFT] At the Dragoon Springs Butterfield Overland stage stop, fluttering Confederate flags mark the burial sites of three Confederate soldiers and a Tucson boy killed by Apache Indians during a nearby battle.
[BELOW] Remnants of rock walls are scant reminders of the station that served as a watering and rest stop for the Butterfield Overland Mail Co. from 1858 to 1861. BOTH BY MARTY CORDANO

The first thing you notice at the battle site is the open ground to the west, north and northeast, the landscape stretching, in shades of purple and brown, all the way back to where the mountains hold up the sky.

They make postcards from views like this. Wide open. Good riding country. Good country for dreams.

But if you stand inside the stacked-rock walls of the old station — portions of which still reach 7 feet high — and look east, everything changes.

The Dragoon Mountains glower over the horizon and give entry to the mazelike hideout known as Cochise Stronghold. Even in the morning sunlight, so bright you can see it fanning down like in a hotel room painting, the mountains possess an aspect of deep foreboding.

If you're like me, it doesn't take

much to imagine the Indians' horses galloping through that draw in the mountains and to hear the pounding of the hooves, and see the warriors' deadly lances outlined against the sky.

I'm betting the Rebels heard the advance of the Apaches early, their cries carried on the incessant wind. Around the town of Dragoon, in the heart of southeast Arizona's Apache country, locals call it the Geronimo wind — a misnomer in the case of the Dragoon Springs fight, because Geronimo's days as an Apache leader were still a generation away.

But the moniker gets the point across. Loosely translated, it means something bad is coming.

If newspapers reported the Dragoon Springs clash accurately, the Rebel command lost 30 mules and 25 horses, in addition to the four dead.

Assuming the Apaches attacked in the numbers historians believe — estimates run upward of 200, based on a fight at Apache Pass two months later — I wonder how any of the Rebels survived.

The fighting had to be hot indeed. The foraging party included three Yankee soldiers captured by the Rebels three months before during a fight on the Gila River. They, too, were pressed into action.

The *Sacramento Union* of October 18, 1862, reported that the prisoners "fought bravely, not so much to aid their captors as to defend themselves against the atrocious

[ABOVE, RIGHT] Despite agaves' unwelcoming appearance, desert-dwelling Indians used the plants for food, medicine and soap, and wove the fibers into mats, sandals, baskets and ropes. RANDY PRENTICE
[RIGHT] Pockmarked with bedrock mortars dug by Indians for grinding their grain, a granite boulder looms in the foreground beyond grasslands at Council Rock about 4 miles south of the Butterfield Overland stage stop. JACK DYKINGA

redskins who make no distinction between Federal and Confederate soldiers, but lie in treacherous ambush alike for all."

Although it can't be confirmed, one of the unmarked graves here might belong to Capt. John Donaldson, a former Federal officer in the Mexican-American War.

In an obituary written shortly after the engagement, Patagonia mine operator Sylvester Mowry wrote that Donaldson, while returning from the cattle search, "fell in the rear of troops to accompany a friend who had charge of a large herd of beeves. The Indians ambushed the party and Donaldson was killed at the first fire."

Finch reports that Donaldson had once been a deputy customs collector, and Sam Ford was a customs patrolman, making it "probable that Ford was Donaldson's cattle-driving friend."

Standing on this bluff, imagining the battlefield scene that day, I think of the small stories wrapped inside the larger one — that of one friend dropping back to help another and dying for his trouble.

And what about these Yankee prisoners taking up arms with their captors? With the passions the Southern rebellion produced on both sides, only sheer desperation — like an attack by Apaches — could have produced such a collaboration.

I wonder if they became friends after the battle? Having survived against a mutual enemy, maybe their enmity cooled.

I can believe it did. According to newspaper reporting, the grave etchings were "neatly cut in rough stone, executed by one of the Union prisoners they had along."

A few days later, on May 9, the Rebels engaged the Apaches a second time.

A scout led by Lt. Robert Swope surprised some Apaches gathering cattle near the springs, according to Finch in *Pathway*. The lieutenant ordered a charge, "leading it himself at least three horse-lengths ahead of his men," recalled one of Hunter's troopers, who remembered the event as it was told to him by Pvt. Thomas McAlpine, an eyewitness.

McAlpine saw Swope shoot an Indian, "and before the red could fall from his horse . . . had him scalped." The Rebels killed five Apaches, lost none of their own and drove the cattle back to Tucson.

The Confederate conquest of Arizona ended when Hunter's cavalry left Tucson for Mesilla on May 14. A Yankee regiment from California reached Tucson six days later, and retook the town without hostilities.

By then, Tucson had practically become a ghost town, according to historian Colton. Some residents sympathetic to the Southern cause had left with Hunter, or fled to Mexico, just as Union loyalists had departed with the arrival of the Rebels. But the citizenry gradually filtered back.

In making their exit, Hunter and his Confederates rode past Dragoon Springs on May 18. If they encountered any Apaches on that last ride, history does not record it.

As for Hunter, the Southern captain became embroiled in several failed attempts to retake Arizona for the Confederacy, including an effort to recruit an ex-patriot army in Mexico. No one knows when or where he died, although most believe he is buried in Mexico.

But those who rode with him remain in Arizona. And if you sit a while, letting the hours pass and the world elsewhere spin to its own concerns, you can relive their stories, atop this windy bluff that time has left alone. AH

Leo W. Banks calls the Dragoon Springs stage stop one of the most accessible historic sites in southern Arizona. He also wrote the Dustin Rockmen story and the Back Road Adventure in this issue.

when you go

LOCATION: 61 miles southeast of Tucson.
GETTING THERE: From Tucson, drive 57 miles east on Interstate 10. Take Exit 318 and follow the winding road 4 miles east to the town of Dragoon. At the first right after the railroad tracks, Old Ranch Road, turn right (south) and drive for 2.3 miles. Turn left at the sign to Dragoon Springs and travel just less than 1 mile.
TRAVEL ADVISORY: Facilities close to Dragoon are in Benson and Willcox.
WARNING: The rocky road past Dragoon requires driving very slowly, but unless it's wet, it is passable by ordinary vehicles.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Willcox Chamber of Commerce, (520) 384-2272 or toll-free (800) 200-2272, www.willcoxchamber.com; Benson Visitor Center, (520) 586-4293, www.bensonchamberaz.com; www.cochisecountry.com/dragoon.html.

ROAD CONSTRUCTION

We asked our readers for road construction jokes, and here are some they sent:

Our foreman is so stubborn, wearing a hard hat would be redundant.

There is so much construction on Arizona roads these days, they're going to change the official state bird to the crane.

Both by GREGG SIEGEL
Gaithersburg, MD

{early day arizona}

"Oh, my!" she exclaimed impatiently. "We'll be sure to miss the first act. We've been waiting a good many minutes for that mother of mine."

"Hours, I should say," he replied tartly.

"Ours?" she cried joyfully. "Oh, George, this is so sudden!"

Jerome Mining News, DECEMBER 23, 1911

A man was speeding down the highway in a construction zone, feeling secure in a group of cars all traveling at the same speed. However, he got nailed by an infrared speed detector and was pulled over.

The officer handed him the citation and was about to walk away when the man asked, "Officer, I know I was speeding in a construction zone, but I don't think it's fair. There were lots of other cars around me going just as fast, so why did I get the ticket?"

"Ever go fishing?" the policeman asked in return.

"Uhhh, yeah," the startled man replied.

The officer grinned and added, "Ever catch *all* the fish?"

ERIK CONNOR, Phoenix

It was 2 A.M. when the state trooper pulled over a driver going 65 mph in a deserted 45 mph road construction zone on the Beeline Highway east of Phoenix.

"What's the hurry?" the officer asked. "Can't you see this road is under construction?"

"But, officer," the driver replied, "I was just trying to keep up with the traffic."

Dumbfounded, the trooper said, "I can't see another car around here for miles."

"See how far behind I am?" the driver answered.

LARRY CHARLES, Peoria

WILLOUGHBY'S WEST

by JIM WILLOUGHBY

UNUSUAL PERSPECTIVE

Colossal Cave in Tucson was once a haven for robbers. Legends say there is still money hidden there, which attracts thousands of tourists. Shoot, if I wanted to spend my time looking for money that doesn't exist, all I have to do is balance my checkbook. — Linda Perret

We don't have to worry about road construction where I'm from. Nothing ever gets fixed.

JOHN KRIWIEL, Oak Lawn, IL

Years ago I worked at a swanky resort in the desert near Tucson when a road construction outfit was busy nearby. Because we were the only restaurant around, I shouldn't have been surprised to see the dust-covered crew come in for lunch.

One fellow said he was going to clean up before ordering. But he didn't come back from the rest room for the longest time.

Finally he came back, looking sheepish. "I know the sign in the rest room said 'EMPLOYEES MUST WASH HANDS,'" he said, "but I couldn't wait any longer. I did it myself."

MRS. GARNETT CHARLES, Sun City

GASOLINE PRICES

While paying for a purchase at a station in Safford, I asked the attendant, an older woman: "Why is gasoline $1.49 in New Mexico, but $1.64 here?"

Her irrefutable reply: "Because it's cheaper over there."

ORVAL LOWE, Safford

SELDOM HEARD

Two buffaloes were standing near a highway when a passing motorist said, "Those are the mangiest, most moth-eaten, miserable beasts I've ever seen."

One buffalo turned to the other and said, "You know, I think I just heard a discouraging word."

HERM ALBRIGHT, Indianapolis, IN

MIGRATORY VULTURES

A staple in a vulture's diet, as everyone knows, is roadkill. Vultures know that the worse people drive, the more they have to eat. Accordingly, much of northern Arizona's vulture population has migrated in recent years to Utah.

JARED WHITLEY, Salt Lake City, UT

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

A boy had a school assignment to write about the job his mother or father held, so he went to his dad, a mechanic, and asked how to explain what he did for a living.

"Son," the father answered, "the easiest way is to say that a mechanic is a person who gives your car a part transplant."

RUTH BURKE, San Simon

{reader's corner}

Salsa has it all over the other condiments. How many people get dressed up on a Friday night to go ketchup dancing? Send us your **salsa jokes**, and we'll pay $50 for each one we published.

TO SUBMIT HUMOR: Send your jokes and humorous Arizona anecdotes to Humor, *Arizona Highways*, 2039 W. Lewis Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85009 or e-mail us at editor@arizonahighways.com. Please include your name, address and telephone number with each submission.

Blue Elementary's Head Count Was Low, but Adventure Was High

BLUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S PHONE pulled me out of my warm bedroom. The mother of half our pupil population said, "Justin won't be in today. He tangled with a skunk."

So began one adventure I had with my wife, Marilyn, and our son Lee, then 3, about 33 years ago while living and teaching at Blue Elementary, a remote one-room school with two students — Justin, an eighth-grader, and Duane, a first-grader.

Strung along the Blue River on the wilderness border of Arizona and New Mexico, the community of Blue counted a ranch population of 25. The nearest town, Alpine, sat 25 miles away on a dirt road.

While scruffy bobcats padded by the windows and quail called from the front playground, we taught reading, writing and arithmetic. For us, though, extracurricular projects provided the real "adventures" in this land of ranches.

The year began tamely enough, but soon we would face problems — and a possible practical joke — encountered by few other Arizona teachers. Marilyn, officially the K-8 teacher, created arithmetic and reading exercises for Duane on her manual typewriter. I worked with her to teach Justin algebra, science, geography and the Arizona Constitution (mandatory for graduation).

Duane wore cowboy boots and a black, broad-brimmed Stetson, just like Justin, who ensured that Duane stayed close to the school at recess.

School had been in session for several months when Justin told me about the many deerhides tossed onto the branches of a huge pine at Blue Lodge, just 7 miles away. Slim Joy, a hunting guide and trailmaster, spread the hides in the tree to dry each hunting season.

Justin knew I wanted to tan a deerhide, so he asked Slim if he could have one for a "class project." Slim gave us the hide and a "recipe" to tan it, using water and oak ashes tinged with chicken manure — very high in nitrates. This supposedly softened the hide so hair could be removed. Justin brought two horseshoe rasps — coarse, 18-inch steel files — and we draped the hide, thoroughly soaked and beginning to smell, over a log in the wash beside the schoolhouse.

During every recess for the next five weeks, we straddled the log and scraped that stubborn hair, using those rasps and sharp pieces of granite — just like people did a century ago.

I felt very pioneerlike.

After six weeks, I took the hide, now nailed onto a frame, to the ranch of veteran hide-tanner Jack Brooks and asked if I'd wasted my time.

Jack stroked his grizzled chin, wanting to know where it came from. When I told him, he didn't laugh; he just suggested I take it somewhere on a dark night and lose it.

That same afternoon, I roped the hide to my Volkswagen rack and drove to the dump on Red Hill Road.

For weeks, Justin muttered that Slim had "put one over" on him and his enthusiastic young teacher. Slim must have figured we knew about tanning only green hides, meaning fresh-skinned. Our hide was too old.

One morning shortly after the deerhide adventure, Justin met up with the skunk on his way to feed the chickens. He glimpsed a black-and-white blur and grabbed a shotgun. Though he got the would-be egg thief, he missed school that day and the next. His mother, he said, made him bury his clothes "out by the back fenceline."

Two days later, he showed up, well scrubbed. A week later, when he passed the Arizona Constitution test, his hair still smelled faintly of turpentine.

Not long after the skunk incident, the school's water pipes froze. We lived in a three-room "teacherage" attached to the school. Pupils used our bathroom. Justin and I broke river ice and filled buckets. Duane counted each bucket we poured to flush the toilet — our last adventure.

At year's end, Justin graduated well prepared for high school. The school board members said they couldn't keep the elementary school open the next year for just one pupil. A board member hinted, humorously, "Adopting six kids would keep the school open."

We laughed, then left in midsummer 1971. We heard that Blue Elementary School reopened the following year with several new students, including Duane in second grade.

Years later, we learned that Justin graduated from high school with good grades, got married and began managing a ranch along the Black Canyon Highway.

When Justin rode his new range, he may have recalled his eighth-grade adventures at Blue School — deerhides, buried clothes and frozen pipes. And, of course, the Arizona Constitution.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Blue Elementary School remains open for several area students today. AH

by Leo W. Banks | photographs by Jerry Sieve

Visit the Camp Wood Area to See 'Real' Old-time Cowboy Country

REAL ARIZONA RANCH country barely exists anymore, so they say. But those willing to spend a day exploring around picturesque Camp Wood will discover the old ways of rural Yavapai County still notched in time by mountains and distance.

This area of the Prescott National Forest also offers terrific picnic and camping spots, and hiking trails threading through cool ponderosa pine trees.

As for those ancient rock forts topping the ridges all around, well, they'll remain a mystery. But you can pass good hours trying to guess who built them, and why.

[ABOVE] A mare and her foal step through a fenced pasture at Yolo Ranch northwest of Prescott.
[OPPOSITE PAGE] Late-afternoon light filtered through ponderosa pine boughs dapples the boulder-strewn Prescott National Forest floor at Camp Wood in the Santa Maria Mountains.

The fun begins on the Williamson Valley Road, marked County Road 5 on some maps, running northwest out of Prescott. It passes white rail fences, grass hills and even farm fields dotted with grazing antelope. After about 22 miles, turn left onto County Road 68 (unmarked) heading west, where the signs simply point to Camp Wood and Yolo Ranch.

Raindrops plinked onto the pickup as we drove with a wonderful windshield view of the Santa Maria Mountains.

"I'm not crazy about hiking in the rain, but we need it so I won't complain if it comes," said 70-year-old Don Johnston of Prescott, my companion this day.

Agreed. But I questioned whether the gray cloud cover might diminish the views.

I got my answer after driving on a mostly flat, washboard road through juniper country. At the 13-mile point, where CR 68 began to rise into the ponderosas and thread its way between Sawmill and Cottonwood mountains, we looked back at the view. Williamson Valley filled the eastern horizon, a broad sweep of many miles hanging with mist.

At about the 16-mile mark, we reached Merritt Spring, a pretty clearing with a small apple orchard behind a pole fence. Expecting signs for Camp Wood, Don and I continued west, unaware we'd passed it by.

Beyond Merritt Spring, the landscape closes in, with tumbles of granite rock crowding both sides of the truck and tall ponderosas shading it overhead.

We expected more wide-open country, and we found exactly that, at the 21-mile mark at Yolo Ranch.

It looks the way a ranch should, at least according to the movies — with a sprawling, fenced meadow, horses lolling in the grass, two wagon wheels hanging on the ranch gate leading to the main house and outbuildings.

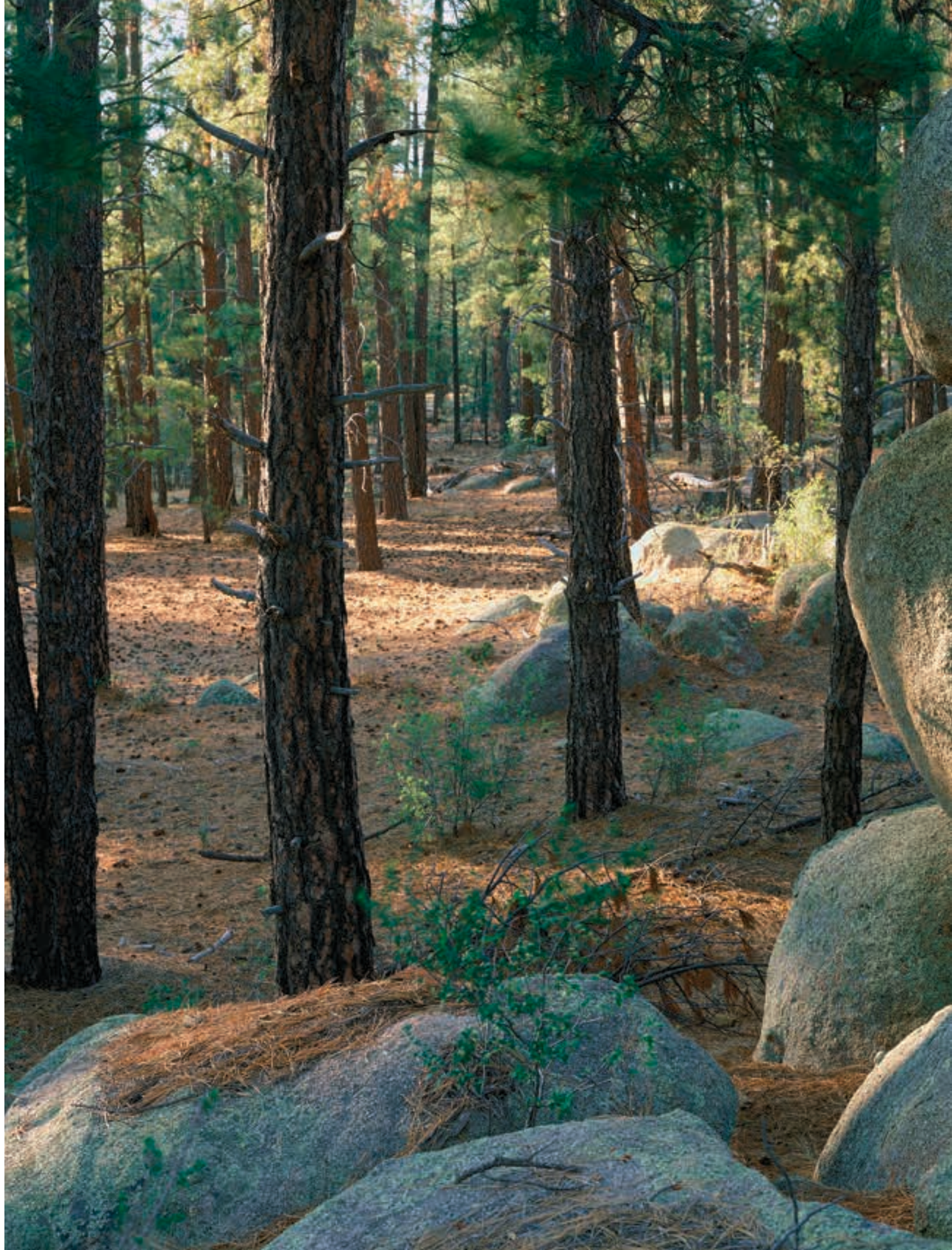
In 1967, *Western Horseman* wrote about roundup at the Yolo, saying it had a reputation for "the best cowboys in the country" working on 110,000 acres stretching from pine trees to saguaro cactus.

The magazine also said the Yolo was a "last frontier in the old style of cowboying."

Certainly the range has closed in since the 1960s and before, but the basics of cowboy life haven't changed at the Yolo, the 7-Up, the Las Vegas and other ranches near Camp Wood. The history goes too deep.

Take Harry Knight, for example. As a young man, he performed as an exhibition rider with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, and for more than 30 years operated the Triangle HC Ranch. Beginning in 1925, he took in guests.

Historians credit Knight with starting the guest-ranch business in Yavapai County. His brochure states: "This is not a hotel, an inn, a resort, a sanatorium, a dude ranch, nor a 5-acre turnip patch. It is a real, successfully operated cow



ranch with first-class guest accommodations."

But Knight also talked about the stone forts used by ancient Indian tribes. With his brochure in hand, we asked friendly Yolo cowboys if they knew where we could find them.

They sent us .6 of a mile down Forest Service Road 702, which connects with CR 68 immediately south of the Yolo meadow. We turned right past a campground and continued a few hundreds yards. Through the trees to our left, we saw the hilltop fort.

The structure measured 66 by 42 feet and consisted of stacks of small rocks standing as high as 5 feet.

Prior to our trip, Jay Eby, a retired Arizona forest ranger, said they were likely defensive positions, rather than homes, built about 1300. Found throughout west-central Arizona, the structures are part of a large system of hilltop forts used for smoke-signaling and as retreats in time of danger.

On that point, Don and I couldn't argue. The fort sat high in the pines, affording an excellent look all around at potential intruders.

The Yolo cowboys also directed us back to Merritt Spring and Forest Service Road 95, which goes north from there to Walnut Creek.

After a few hundred yards on 95, we finally found the remains of Camp Wood, today consisting only of a few decaying foundations. The site once bustled with a post office, lumber mill, forest headquarters and a Depression-era camp for Civilian Conservation Corps workers.

Prescott resident Lois Merritt Ward, now 82, lived there in the 1930s and said in an interview that the Camp was a world unto itself, rugged and isolated with no bridges and much heavier snowfall than today.

"In winter, my parents bought six months of groceries because you couldn't get in and out through 6 feet of snow," said Ward, whose mom planted the Merritt Spring apple trees. "We had a one-room schoolhouse and a live-in teacher that my mother interviewed, so you know she was good."

Ward recalled accompanying her parents to the Yolo bunkhouse to vote. The entire community of 11 adults partook in the civic ceremony. "I missed Camp Wood when I left for high school," said Ward. "All those people were my friends."

Don and I found Forest Service Road 95C, opposite the Camp Wood campground, and followed it west for almost a mile to a burned-out patch of forest. More old foundations are seen along 95C. We hiked through the charred trees to a rise and, as Eby had predicted, we saw another well-preserved fort, about a mile away to the northeast.

From the burn on FR 95C, hikers can continue up to Hyde Mountain Lookout, elevation 7,272 feet, the highest point in the Santa Marias. Don describes the walk as difficult, but the views from the peak encompass much of northern Arizona, including Flagstaff.

Most roads around Camp Wood are easily traveled by high-clearance vehicles. Take binoculars, a picnic lunch and good hiking shoes to explore this country rich in ancient history, ranch history and history yet to be made. AH

[RIGHT] Rustic barbed-wire fencing encloses pastureland at Yolo Ranch as the Santa Maria Mountains meet the sky to the northeast. [BELOW, LEFT] Mounted between two posts, a wagon wheel adds interest to the fence line along the road through the ranch property. [BELOW, RIGHT] When the Yolo Ranch house was built of logs from a previous bunkhouse and a dining room around 1945, the cowboys joked that ranch owners and their guests would have a "scratching good time" because of the bedbugs. [OPPOSITE PAGE] The rolling hills of the Santa Maria Mountains near Camp Wood are covered with Utah and alligator junipers, ponderosa and piñon pines, mountain mahogany, scrub oaks and manzanita shrubs.

KEVIN KIRSEY

travel tips

WARNING: Back road travel can be hazardous if you are not prepared for the unexpected. Whether traveling in the desert or in the high country, be aware of weather and road conditions, and make sure you and your vehicle are in top shape. Carry plenty of water. Don't travel alone, and let someone at home know where you're going and when you plan to return. Odometer readings in the story may vary by vehicle.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Prescott National Forest, Prescott Ranger District, (928) 443-8000, www.fs.fed.us/r3/prescott. A map of the Prescott National Forest is recommended for this back road route.

by Rebecca Mong | photographs by Edward McCain

Tumacacori Mission Provided Communal Respite in Times of Upheaval

PRIESTLY PIETY IN NEW SPAIN and conversion of the friendly Pima Indians. New prayers and new ways of living on the Indians' ancient land. Then, political upheaval, violence and, finally, flight.

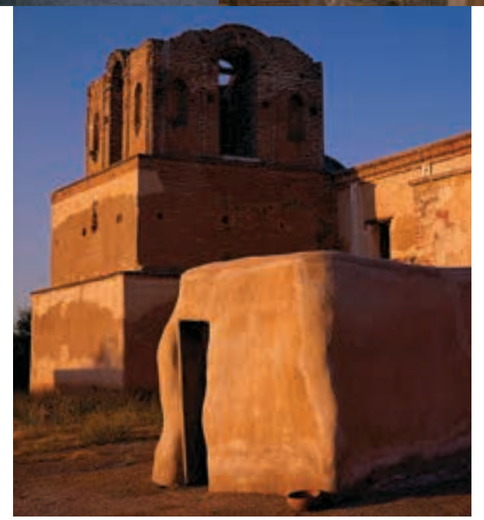
That's the 300-year-old story of San Jose de Tumacacori Mission, whose beautiful ruins stand 48 miles south of Tucson, along the Santa Cruz River and southwest of the Santa Rita Mountains, where the priests and Pimas risked provoking Apaches to acquire timber and limestone. The mission is the main unit of Tumacacori National Historical Park, which includes less extensive ruins of two other missions, Guevavi and Calabazas, about 15 miles north of Tumacacori (pronounced "toomaCAHcoree").

"When people hear the word 'mission,' they think of a church building," said Ranger Don Garate, Tumacacori's chief of interpretation. "But a mission was the community, with dwellings, farm fields, livestock pens, classrooms, workrooms, priests' quarters and, ideally — but not necessarily — a church."

Tumacacori had it all, including — eventually — the church, which was probably designed by a master artist from Mexico and built by Pima and Spanish workers, he added. The mission also encompassed a mortuary chapel, a cemetery, a lime kiln for making plaster and an orchard. Wheat and cattle flourished in the fields.

Today a visitors center houses a museum and gift shop, and traditional plants such as gourds grow in a patio garden along with grapevines and olive, pomegranate and other trees. On weekends, spring through fall, local artisans demonstrate basketmaking and other traditional crafts. I recently "lunched" on tortillas and refried beans after watching Carmen Chavez prepare them using an iron-topped open fire. Other demonstrators make paper flowers, weave baskets and paint on glass. The park's biggest celebration, La Fiesta de Tumacacori, takes place in early December and attracts thousands with period costumes, traditional entertainment and foods.

[LEFT] At Tumacacori National Historical Park south of Tucson, the white sanctuary dome caps the Tumacacori Mission church in this view through an arch at the visitors center. The mission's name may come from two Pima words — *chu-uma* and *kakul* — possibly describing flat, rocky terrain.



[ABOVE, LEFT] A mesquite tree stretches protective branches above grave markers in the mission's cemetery.
[ABOVE, RIGHT] About 16 feet in diameter, the round mortuary chapel in the foreground was built to avoid possible smallpox contagion by removing funerals from the church. JACK DYKINGA
[LEFT] Sunrise brightens the eastern walls of the bell tower and the humble entrance to the sacristy, where mission priests kept their ceremonial robes and signed official documents.

Park policy calls for preservation, not restoration, so Tumacacori remains remarkably original. "The church's roof, which had disappeared, was replaced in 1927," said Garate. "The floor, which had been destroyed by treasure-hunters, and the front door were also replaced. The huge pediment on the church facade had fallen off, and that was put back on. Except for those things, and some shoring up of walls and coats of white plaster to protect against moisture damage, Tumacacori is original."

Today's church, with some still-visible paintings, a beautiful but underfunded and therefore unfinished bell tower, granary, and priests' quarters, dates from 1800. But the mission's story really began in 1691 with the arrival of Jesuit missionary-explorer Eusebio Francisco Kino at the old village of Tumacacori.

Kino established the mission at Tumacacori, as well as the one at Guevavi (Calabazas came later), but didn't erect a church building. Decades later, after the Pima Revolt of 1751 resulted in the establishment of a military presidio at nearby Tubac, congregants worshipped in a modest church. When Spain's Charles III expelled Jesuits from New Spain in 1767-68, the mission came under the mantle of the Franciscans, who built the present church. But a plague of troubles lay ahead: not enough money, continuing Apache attacks and fallout from the politics of Spain, Mexico and the United States (the Mexican War). Even extreme weather played a role. In December 1848, Tumacacori lay abandoned.

The missions became part of the U.S. with the 1853 Gadsden Purchase, a national monument in 1908 and a national historical park in 1990.

The mission's guidebook, which explains numbered stops, is helpful to those who take self-guided rather than ranger-led tours. And there's plenty to see.

For example, in the visitors center, a huge window frames a view of the church. Later, I came upon a vantage looking at the church from the east side that affords another stunning through-the-bell-tower view.

Egyptian-style designs grace the church facade, courtesy of Moorish Spain. Just inside the front door, a big crack caused by the earthquake of 1887 runs down the wall of the 75-foot nave. The sanctuary, which never lost its protective roof, holds the best-preserved paintings. The sacristy's blackened ceiling was caused by post-abandonment travelers starting wood fires to warm themselves.

Relatively recent graves around the circular Mortuary Chapel include a child's tiny blue crypt added in 1916, the last burial at the mission. Everyone stops there. Garate explained that although incomplete records show 625 burials on the grounds, mission-era graves are no longer visible.

At the end of a solo or group tour, a visitor might sit in a secluded spot and imagine the sights and sounds of the mission when it bustled with activity. Perhaps the bells in the tower might even ring out, continuing Tumacacori's still-unfinished story. AH

LOCATION: 48 miles south of Tucson.
GETTING THERE: Drive south on Interstate 19 to Exit 29.
HOURS: Daily, 8 A.M.-5 P.M.; closed Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.
FEES: $3, over age 16.
EVENTS: December 4-5, 10 A.M.-5 P.M.: La Fiesta de Tumacacori features music, folkloric dancing, a mariachi Mass, traditional arts and crafts and foods. Free admission. Spring through fall, weekends and some weekdays: demonstrations for creating baskets, pottery, paper flowers and tortillas. Call for schedule.
TRAVEL ADVISORY: Call about other events; ranger-led Tumacacori tours, self-guided tour booklet, $1, in visitors center. Reservations required for guided tours of Guevavi and Calabazas, $17.50 per person.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: (520) 398-2341, www.nps.gov/tuma.

arizonahighways.com

A 'Friendly' Rattlesnake Adds Its Welcome to Carr Peak Trail

As we hiked up Carr Peak Trail in the Huachuca Mountains' Miller Peak Wilderness, my mind was on wildflowers, butterflies and birds. But it seemed that everyone we met only wanted to talk about the rattlesnake.

Photographer Marty Cordano and I started out from Reef Campground, hiking through an area that was burned in 1977. It was heartening, after all the recent fires in Arizona, to see how this forest is recovering. The mountainside is blanketed with oaks and small conifer trees, and the meadow grasses were sprinkled with wildflowers. Bright yellow sunflowers predominated, accented by red penstemons, pale-blue asters, wild pink geraniums, scarlet cinquefoils, purple verbena and orange splashes of Indian paintbrush.

[Above] Yellow columbines and red cinquefoil add bright splashes of summertime color along Carr Peak Trail in the Huachuca Mountains southeast of Tucson.
[Opposite page] A profusion of wildflowers such as Aspen sunflowers, asters, penstemons, wild geraniums, cinquefoils, verbena and Indian paintbrush attest to the regeneration of the Miller Peak Wilderness in the wake of the 2002 Oversite Fire.

Our 5.75-mile round-trip hike to Carr Peak, at about 9,200 feet the second-highest peak in the Huachucas, gains 1,800 feet in elevation.

As we followed the trail, Marty pointed out a band-tailed pigeon, as big as its urban relatives, perched on a pine snag. Yellow butterflies—dainty sulphurs and a large two-tailed swallowtail—fluttered among the flowers. We were surprised to see a sphinx moth, usually a nighttime insect, sipping nectar with the butterflies.

We met two hikers, John Walrath and his 17-year-old son Aaron, from Tucson. They told us about a black-tailed rattlesnake farther up the trail, near the grove of aspen trees where I was hoping to find columbines. Around the next bend we met a couple from England. They warned us to watch out for the rattlesnake. More hikers, a group of three, told us "the snake's tail is in the trail but the rest of it's under a bush. It's easy to get around it" they said. "Just look where the grass has been tramped down."

At the aspen grove, we both found what we were looking for. The handsomely patterned black-tailed rattlesnake posed obligingly for Marty, and I was elated to see the delicate yellow columbines lining the pathway through a tunnel of young aspen trees.

Beyond the aspens, the mountainside, dotted with charred trees from the 2002 Oversite Fire, was awash in a riotous display of wildflowers. Between the wild bees gathering pollen, butterflies flitting from flower to flower and tiny green hummingbirds zipping about, it was a busy place.

Two miles from the start of the hike lies the signed junction to Carr Peak. The route switchbacks up between large Douglas fir trees to the bald summit, which offers impressive views of the vast southeastern Arizona landscape.

"Times have changed," Marty remarked as we sat admiring the view. "In years past, people would have killed that snake or at least have been in a panic over it. Everyone we met today seemed not only pleased to have seen it, but wanted to pass the word along to fellow hikers."

It was the last day of August and storm clouds gathered as we retraced our route. The wildflowers' upturned faces seemed to welcome the raindrops and, I suppose, so did the placid snake concealed somewhere among them. AH

Location: Approximately 80 miles southeast of Tucson.
Getting There: From Tucson, travel southeast on Interstate 10 to Exit 302. Turn south onto State Route 90 and travel through Sierra Vista to State Route 92. Turn right and drive south for 7 miles to Carr Canyon Road, marked Forest Service Road 368 on some maps; turn right on Carr Canyon Road and drive 6.5 miles to the Reef Campground. Park at the trailhead, across the road from the campground.
Travel Advisory: A high-clearance vehicle is preferred for travel on the dirt road to the trailhead.
Additional Information: Coronado National Forest, Sierra Vista Ranger District, (520) 378-0311.

KEVIN KIBSEY

Before you go on this hike, visit our Web site at arizonahighways.com for other things to do and places to see in the area.